

INDUSTRIAL NATION

Patrick Codenys of
Front 242's new project
Male or Female

Issue 17

Rhy Fulber of
Conjure One

Assemblage 23

Covenant

Alec Empire
of Atari Teenage Riot

Hocico

Psyche

Noisex

Suicide Commando



DJ Acucrack - Biotek - Kompressor - Massiv in Mensch - Informatik
Somatic Responses - Corvin Dalek - Aiboforcen - Severed Heads

\$3.95 US \$5.50 CAN



17

NEW AND UPCOMING RELEASES



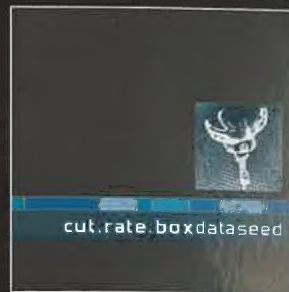
STromKERN (SK!) re-align

The Re-align EP is the second single and first stand alone EP from Stromkern's critically acclaimed Armageddon release. (WTII 010). This North American only EP contains three new remixes of the title track, including renditions by Seabound and cut.rate.box and new remixes of "Perfect Sunrise" (La Floa Maldita), "Armageddon" (Infrastructure), "No Release" (Battery Cage) and "Terrorist" (Haujobb). To kick things up another notch, the band has also added their own interpretation of the Gang of Four classic Anthrax. Overall this is a solid release that will leave fans, new and old, screaming for more.



cut.rate.box dataseed

The North American release and most recent offering from the duo known as cut.rate.box. Musically, dataseed can be described as an amalgamation of powerful beats, mind warping programming and intellectually driven lyrics. Dataseed also features a guest appearance from Victoria Lloyd (HMB and Claire Voyant) on the track "Enigma" and the US version features new artwork, conceived and designed, by the members of cut.rate.box. This version also features exclusive new mixes from Stromkern and DJ Tony Estrada as well and an alternate version of "This Ice" called "Thin Air" in addition to the Assemblage23 remix of "Zionsank." This release is a progression to another dimension.



Trigger10d

The Difference is a Boy

After months of manipulation and fine tuning, Trigger10d is set to unleash their signature sound to the world with their debut offering, The Difference is a Boy. An eclectic mix of trip hop, noise, darkwave, pop and trance, their sound and style can be compared to no other. Passionate female vocals and deep lyrical content embraces the soul while the intricate and intelligent programming intensifies the overall vibe. An absolutely stellar debut!



beborn beton Tales From Another World

The first domestic release from this legendary synthpop trio. Exclusive to North America, this 2xCD set serves as a brief retrospective of the bands extensive 13 year history on disc 1 and provides a glimpse of the future with 8 new remixes on disc 2. Hear why Beborn Beton is considered one of the true pioneers.



STATE OF THE UNION BLACK CITY LIGHTS

Fusing an intelligent mix of Electro, Techno, Trance and Synthpop with hard pounding beats and emotional lyrics, State of the Union set out to defy all boundaries on their debut Black City Lights. This release only scratches the surface of what this band has to offer.

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Hocico

Mexican EBM terrorists Hocico spread the hate and energy and tell us just what exactly Hocico means in Spanish.



Informatik

"Dasid Din talks with Industrialnation about his pervy new Informatik release and future touring plans.



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Ex-Front Line Assemblyman Rhys Fulber talks with us about life without Bill and his new project Conjure One.



Severed Heads

Industrial music legend Tom Ellard pops up from down under to talk about his most recent Severed Heads and Coklacoma releases.



Biotek

Jonathan Sharp endeavors to keep EBM evil in with his latest Bio-Tek offering.



Psyche

With almost two decades and no less than 15 records behind him, Darrin Huss links the band's past to its present and calculates his musical trajectory.



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Welsh brothers John and Paul Healy swear to us they aren't really serial killers, despite the evil music they make.



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Industrialnation decides to get "wet and hard" with Corvin Dalek and find out what its like to be Europe's most perverted DJ.



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hello

I like living and I like to have money

by working in 'INDUSTRIAL' I lost nearly \$60,000 in five years

take some good advice, give up!

it's not worth it mate, life is bigger and better.

see ya

x

**"Don't blame me, I'm just the messenger
I don't know what the message means
Don't blame me, I'm just the messenger
I'm just the messenger don't blame me,"
Cruxshadows — "Binary"**

Dear IN,

My name is Frank Stanley. I desperately need a subscription to your magazine, every other fucking magazine sucks, please, please, please. I sent you guys a letter because I couldn't get you online so if you would please send me a subscription you would save my life. Please help me!

Frank Stanley,
Cambria, CA.

**"It's so quiet I can hear My thoughts touching
every second I spent Waiting for you
Circumstances afford me No second chance
To tell you How much I've missed you."
VNV Nation — "Beloved"**

Greetings IN,

I see that you have moved once again. I sent a letter off to your Pleasant Hill address and it was returned by the Post Office. What, do you have three ex-wives in hot pursuit?

The last issue I have of IndustrialNation is number 16. Actually, it is the only issue I have. In any case, please inform if you are still publishing IN, what issue you may be up to now, and the price of the current issue. I have enclosed a S.A.S.E to facilitate your reply. Thanks.

Cordially,
Harold L. Lesser
Selden, NY

**"Contentment overfed with feigned luxury. We
didn't recognize the screen. A troublesome
smile overshadows the brightened sky."
Haujobb — "The Cage Complex"**

Greetings IN,

I just received your note regarding the expected publication of issue 17 in December. It's good to hear that you are still alive and persevering in the face of adversity, and that you have at long last found an address where the populace is willing to let you hang around for awhile. Yeah, guess Oakland would be it. From what I've read, people there will put up with just about anyone: Hell's Angels, MS 13, etc.



I am enclosing \$4.00 cash in the hope that #17 will indeed be out sometime this millennium. If you have the moment when mailing my copy, please advise to the price of an issue mailed to Latvia, as I have a friend there who may still be interested. At least I think I do. I am so damned behind on everything and I need to get a letter out to him. In the meantime, best of luck with it all, and I'll be looking forward to reading issue 17.

Cordially,
Harold L. Lesser
Selden NY

**"Well, I can reduce you if I want. I can devour.
I'm hard as fucking steel. I've got the power, I'm
every inch a man and I'll show you somehow, me
and my fucking gun, nothing can stop me now."
Nine Inch Nails — "Big Man With a Gun"**

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FREE DVD GIVEAWAY



5 free Speed Tribe or Male or Female DVDs each month!

Dance.com is giving away 5 free Speed Tribe or Male or Female DVDs each month from January to June, 2003. Both DVD/CD albums feature Daniel B. and Patrick Codenys of Front 242 in amazing surround sound, and are released on the new Dance.com label.

This contest is courtesy of Dance.com and IndustrialNation.
To enter, go to:

www.industrialnation.com/freeDVD

<http://www.IndustrialNation.com>

**"I am naked
I have nothing left
My bones are picked clean
And riddled with regrets
Nothing can touch me
I've nothing left to take
For I am naked
But I can never break"
Assemblage 23 — "Naked"**

I think ex-IN contributor Tom Shear sums up everything right there. So many things have happened since the last issue came out close to four years ago!

Ever since we started to express interest in reviving the community that is IndustrialNation, we have been overwhelmed with an overall surge of enthusiasm and from contributors, readers, bands, labels, almost everyone we've been in contact with. This has been extremely refreshing to me personally.

Alright story time. Not long after the release of issue #16 of IN, we were beginning preparation for issue #17, collecting reviews, setting up interviews, and living life in sunny California. Like life changed for so many on September 11, 2001, life changed drastically that late May for me as well. Geri, the girl I was dating/living with, and I were in the midst of moving apartments. As with every move, there is so much up in the air and so much stress to deal with at times like these. Well, I had left early in the morning to move boxes to the new place, and Geri had stayed behind to pack more boxes. I returned to the old apartment to find nothing new packed. Having been gone for 4 hours I found this extremely odd, and Geri was no where to be found. After sitting around a couple of hours, cleaning and packing the rest of the things, wondering where Geri had run off too (she was prone to little sporadic adventures), 2 policemen knocked at the door. They gently informed me that Geri had called

911 earlier that day and subsequently passed away of a fatal Asthma attack. The part I neglected to mention here is that Geri had always had a rather severe case of Asthma, and we had spent many late nights in the hospital together with her on a respirator. However, never did I think she could have befallen such a fate at such a young age.

To make matters worse, at the same time, another key person involved in the magazine was in the hospital waiting for his/her significant other to get out of a surgery room.

It has taken a while for me to confront with the demons in my head, but I look forward, knowing that life is short and meant to be lived, and sitting around rotting it away is such a waste.

I personally have so much enthusiasm when it comes to getting IndustrialNation back on track and providing the underground music community with the best un-biased coverage we can offer. Being a complete DIY person, the all volunteer-base has always made it challenging, but seriously, if we didn't have the incredible contributors and people willing to go that extra mile, IndustrialNation wouldn't be what it is today.

IndustrialNation magazine is, as it always has been, a definitive independent guide to the underground electronic music scene. We will continue to grow, expand, and broaden our musical palette into new realms of music the masses deem "underground." At the same time, covering the music that put us on the map. We have decided to release 2 issues a year. Expect to see Issue #18 mid 2003.

I look forward with a rejuvenated outlook for a bright future, Cory Hart and me driving around with our sunglasses at night.

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Assemblage 23



By Theresa DeLucci Photo : Jerry Bennett

A clean slate is meant to be filled, and Tom Shear, the amicable man (and former Industrialnation writer) behind one of America's premiere electro acts, Assemblage 23, is about to become very busy. Again.

The hard work began with Assemblage 23's debut album *Contempt*, which, shortly after its release in 2000, began systematically tearing up dance floors across the country with the pounding singles "Surface," "Purgatory," and the aptly-titled "Anthem." US and international tours followed, as well as guest spots on anthologies and appearances remixing songs by such artists as Claire Voyant, Kevorkian Death Cycle, Flesh Field, and Pain Station. Assemblage 23's sopho-

more effort in 2001, the acclaimed *Failure* album, demonstrated the evolution in Shear's musical composition skill and range, as well as showcased Shear's ability to pen emotional, searing lyrics (most notably about his father's death on the track "Disappoint"). Among other accolades, *Failure* won two Synthcon Awards for Best U.S. Album and Best U.S. Single (for "Disappoint").

Fresh from the studio recording the *Defiance*, follow-up album to *Failure*, and back from headlining the successful Synthpop Goes The World festival, the perennially busy Shear was kind enough to discuss the future of Assemblage 23 with Industrialnation.

IN: Firstly - Congratulations on your Synthcon awards.

Tom Shear: Thanks!

IN: What sparked the move from Gashed! Records to Metropolis?

TS: They weren't serious about running a label that was going to go somewhere. I never asked to leave, though. I told them I wanted my next full-length to

be on a label with better resources, but that they could keep the back catalogue and release the maxi single and remix album which I was working on at the time. Instead, Eric (the guy that ran Gashed) freaked out, told me I had to give him nearly \$9,000 within 2 weeks or he'd sell me off to whoever he wanted to. Very mature. I got my lawyer involved at this point, and it became a big ugly mess. Finally he just sold my rights to Metropolis, which is what he should've done in the first place.

IN: You wrote on your website that *Defiance* further sets Assemblage 23 apart from similar-minded acts by exploring new directions and defining its own sounds." How? How do you see Assemblage 23's evolution since *Contempt*?

TS: I made a deliberate effort to avoid the trancey type sounds everyone and their mother is using these days for one thing. I want this to be an album that sounds different from everyone else's and not just get lost in a sea of sound-alikes. And while it's by

no means an experimental album, I used some more experimental elements this time around. One track starts out with a rhythm built out of a sample of the noisy audio outputs of a modified Game Boy. There is a LOT of Reaktor on this used mainly for twisting samples up and chopping up beats. As for evolution... I don't know. I hope I get closer and closer to the ideal I am hearing in my head with each release.

IN: Is this part of what the title *Defiance* refers to?

TS: That's not really what I had in mind, but that certainly works well!

IN: *Contempt* was really well-received - any sophomore jitters while working on *Failure*?

TS: Like you wouldn't believe. I think I drove everyone around me nuts the whole time I was working on it because I was completely neurotic about whether it was going to turn out alright or if I was going to get slammed by the sophomore jinx.

IN: Was it easier to work on your third album, getting past the second album? Did you feel less pressure during the making of *Defiance*?

TS: No, if anything I actually felt more pressure. *Failure* was so well-received that I knew expectations would be high for *Defiance*, but above that even, I am just really demanding of myself. I am most definitely my own harshest critic.

IN: Do you follow your reviews?

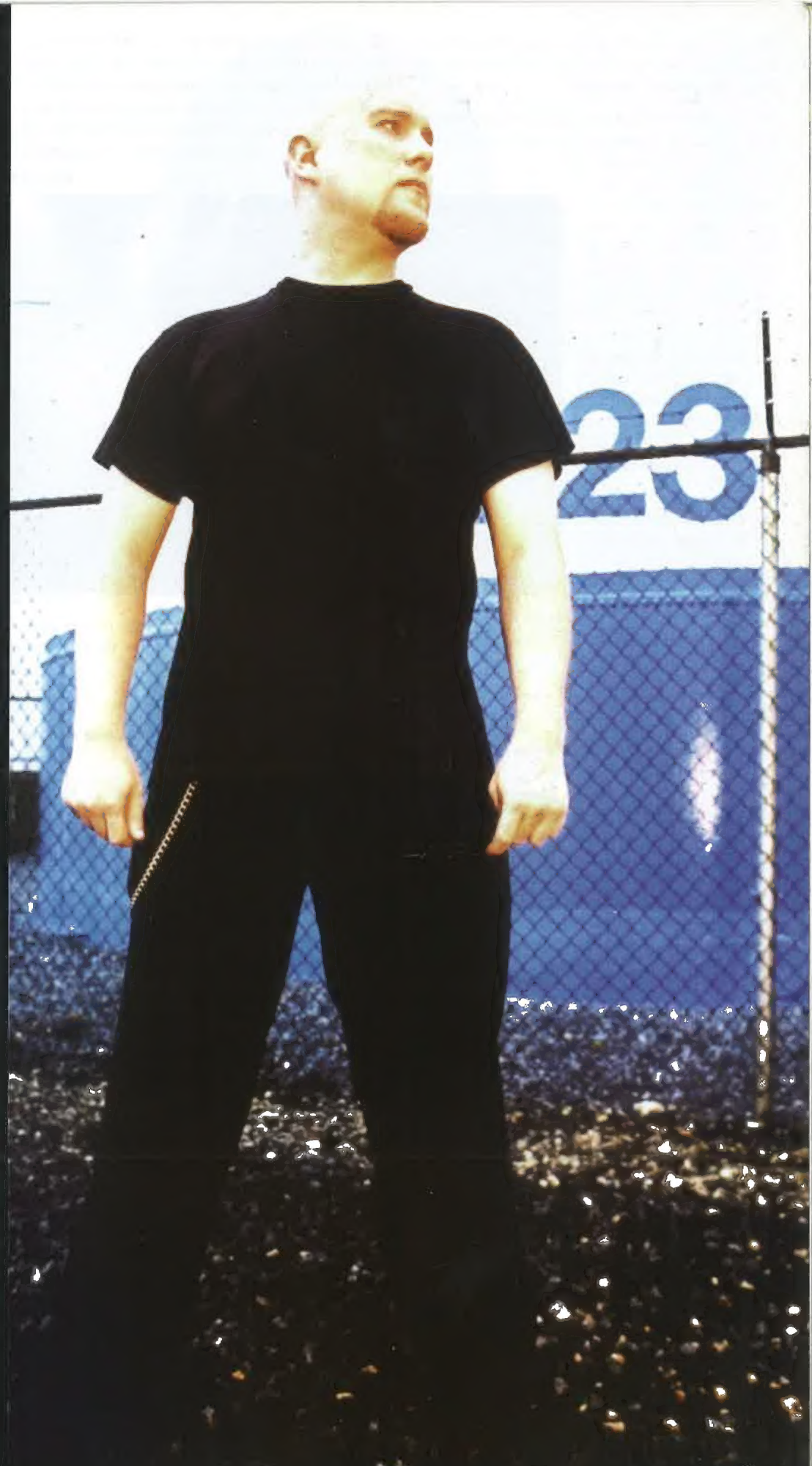
TS: When I come across one, I'll read it, but I don't go looking to track them down. It's good to get a general feel for what people think of your work, but opinions vary so widely that they really don't hold too much meaning for me. Whether someone likes what I am doing or not, I'd still be doing the same thing.

IN: *Failure* seems to be deeply personal, even more so than *Contempt*. It really runs through a wide range of emotions - anger and fear, grief and forgiveness. Was it difficult to write this album?

TS: Quite the opposite, actually. Music for me is a lot like therapy. It helps me sort of exorcise any demons I might have, and get through difficult times. So although a lot of the topics are rather dark, it is very gratifying to be able to write about it and, in a sense, get it behind me.

IN: How did you feel after you finished making *Failure*? It sounds like someone getting rid of some very powerful demons and maybe sharing some words of wisdom.

TS: I had worked so intensely for a couple months on the album that by the time I was finished, I really didn't know what to think of it. I didn't play it for anyone except my girlfriend until it was done, so I really hadn't gotten any outside feedback. I was certainly relieved to be finished with it though.



INDUSTRIALNATION

ASSEMBLAGE 23

<http://www.Industrialnation.com>

indripc.com

ASSEMBLAGE 23

INDUSTRIALNATION

IN: Were you afraid that the album's dedication to the memory of your father would influence the way people interpreted the songs?

TS: Not really because the dedication was a personal thing more for myself and my family than anything else. But I also hope, although it may sound corny, that if people understood the origins of some of the tracks, that it might help them get through a similar situation. I've already received a lot of very nice letters from people who have had a relative or friend commit suicide and who said the songs meant a lot to them. I think that's sort of a nice tribute to my dad. Having something nice come out of something so horrible.

IN: How was *Failure* different to compose musically?

TS: It was a little different in that I switched over to using a software sequencer and audio package, so I had a lot more flexibility and was also a lot more efficient.

IN: How did you put together the *Addendum* EP, namely deciding which songs weren't right for *Failure*?

TS: The new tracks were songs that I had in mind while I was working on *Failure*. I actually write a lot of music in my head when I am away from the studio, so these were ideas I was carrying around at that time and just wasn't sure if they would fit the flow of the album as a whole.

IN: You've done lots of remixes - what do you find exciting about them?

TS: It's challenging, but in a really fun way. I think it also gives me a chance to be a bit more relaxed musically and do things that I might not do traditionally within *Assemblage 23*. It's just a lot of fun.

IN: Is there anyone in particular you'd like to work with next? Anybody you'd be curious to hear remixing *Assemblage 23*?

TS: Oh, I don't know... I'm sending out a lot of stuff to be remixed right now, so a lot of the people I was interested in hearing remixes from will be doing them... Daniel Myer, for one.

IN: What about producing? What have your experiences been like?

TS: I have to honestly say that I don't think I'll produce other bands again. It turned out to be a lot more difficult than I was expecting it to be, and it's hard at times to have the attention span you need to spend 12 hours a day working on something when it's not your own music. I don't know... I suppose I

Photo: Sam Atakra



should never say never, but for right now, I don't think I'll be producing anything other than my own material.

IN: What are you listening to now?

TS: I've been going back and listening to a lot of

down-time, or going right into lots of show dates?

TS: We're going to do some more US dates to round out the end of this year, then we're planning on a 6-week tour of Europe in January!

IN: So, was having your equipment stolen the worst thing to happen to you while on tour?

IN: What movies would you have liked to have written the score for?

TS: Man, that's tough... *Pi* maybe. I thought that was a real mediocre one that could've been so much better.

IN: I have to ask this! I see you thank Ralph Wiggum on your liner notes. He's my favorite Simpsons character - was that an inside joke or are you just one of those fans that watches the Simpsons every time it's on?

TS: I am completely obsessed with the Simpsons. I'm the type of person that, even if I've seen an episode 20 times, I will watch it whenever it comes on. At 6:30 every day, everything just STOPS. Got to get my fix!

IN: What's coming up in the future of *Assemblage 23*? Are you planning any

Photo: Sam Atakra



TS: Actually, the worst part was almost getting mugged in San Francisco. We wandered into a part of town we really shouldn't have been in, and a rather large group of these cracked out guys tried to start trouble... that could've been really bad.

IN: What have been some recent good experiences on tour?

TS: The best was the same day our stuff was stolen in Seattle, we were determined to still play the show... and when we did so, 50 many people came out to give support... it was really heart-warming.

IN: Thanks so much for taking the time to do this - anything else you

want people to know about *Assemblage 23*?

TS: I just want to thank everyone who has supported us, as well as thanking you for the interview!

Dejanee was released October 2002 on Metropolis Records.

Visit *Assemblage 23*'s official website at:

www.assemblage23.com

early electronic music lately...Tangerine Dream, Jean Michel Jarre, Vangelis... that sort of stuff.

IN: You did the score for the movie *The Good Thief*. Have you always been interested in doing something like that?

TS: Yeah, I think for the long haul it's a direction I'd really like to explore more of... the music public is very fickle, but film composing is something you can do for quite a long time.

IN: Who are your favorite film composers?

PROJEKT

libereal gothic & darkAmbient

black tape for a blue girl the scavenger bride



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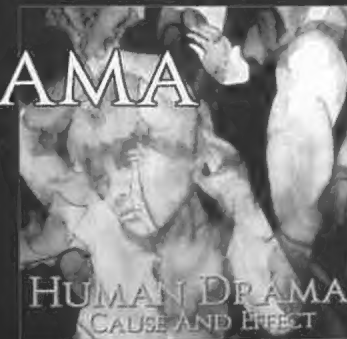
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Mors Syphilitica, Lycia, Audra
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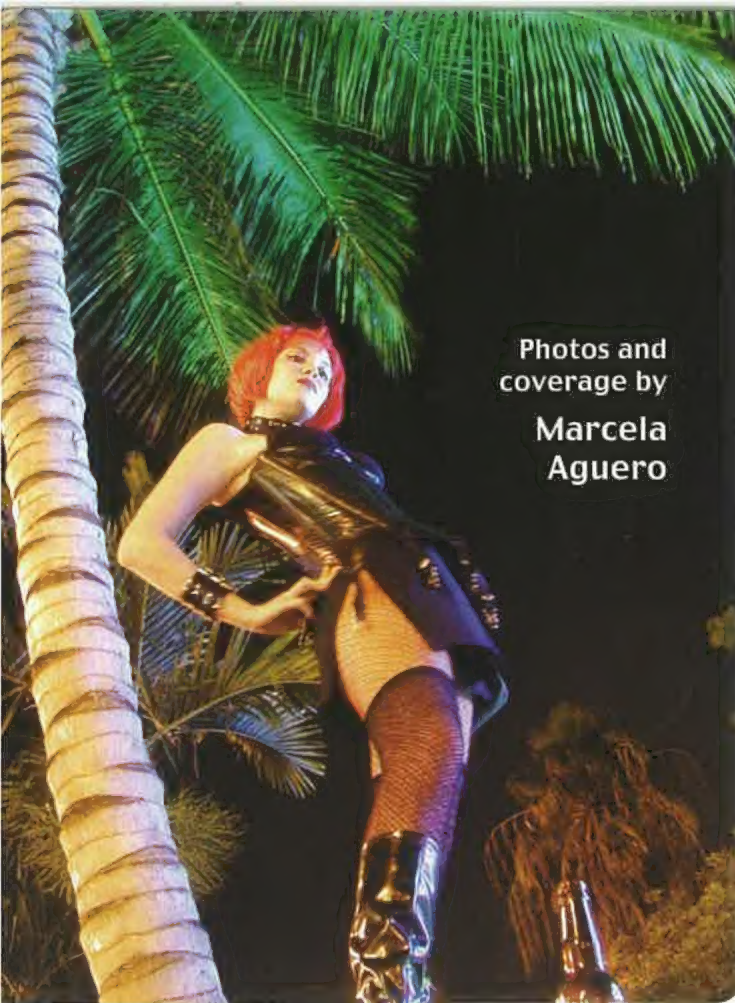


HUMAN DRAMA

CAUSE AND EFFECT

Not Available in Stores.
Mail-Order-Only.





Photos and
coverage by
**Marcela
Aguero**



South Florida (eastside) **SCENE SPOT**

local shows around. Underland Privat is the brainchild of electronic band DPX and was once a stable venue in the heart of Miami.

Club SOHO has opened up a new 3 room event on Saturdays called Voltaire, and is located in the design district.

Creativity thrives in this non-metropolitan area where everything is not conveniently located within walking distance. Extra effort is necessary to make even entertainment happen. Perhaps this is why South Florida is the birthing ground for great inventiveness, ambition, and some of the most original efforts by many to put on some great events. The following is an attempt to briefly cover the goings-on of the industrial nightlife, in Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties with prior apologies to any (of the many) who may be left out.

We start in Dade County, bienvenidos a Miami! A now defunct club but still thriving traveling gig called Underland Privat is supplying the Miami region with one-time events and, as always, bringing together some of S. FL's most talented musicians for some of the best

On South Beach there is endless entertainment of all genres, events, and great shops, but the most industrial thing you'll find there is Uncle Sam's Music Store (also located in Lauderhill, Broward). If you are going to be music-hunting while in S. Florida, you will certainly want to pay them a visit.

Promoter and DJ Sin who carries on the tradition of DJ Danny Bled and club Manray has his own version of "sin" nights at club O'Zone. Sin boasts it's playlists of all the hits you want to hear and is hosted in a pleasant atmosphere every Wednesday night (request your songs online: www.djsin.com).

If you're looking for a hardcore, depth-filled evening of dancing to a less-popular blend of amazing music while in Miami, then certainly seek out the ageless Kitchen club! (a club so underground, most Floridians don't even know where to find it). If you're lucky they'll have a good night in store for you somewhere. The Kitchen Club's owner Aldo (aka DJ 16-bit) deserves notoriety for always remaining passionate about, and seeking out great music. And though the club has suffered many relocations, they're still going strong (industrial style) since 1988, and can easily compare to, or surpass, the likes of more popular clubs such as NYC's Downtime. 16-bit and DJ Carlos Menendez are currently hosting their night at club 5922, best to check for updates at thekitchenclub.org. Also in Miami is Mass, another event held at various venues which has just recently celebrated it's 1 year anniversary on September 1st. It is hopefully here to stay, and with its enormous attendance, shows the promise of sticking around at

least for now (their info at www.masssite.net). Moving northward into Broward County we have what has been the sole consistent provider of industrial-related entertainment for the area over the past year. The Venus Room, a one bar room with an outside patio (where you can enjoy the S. FL rain in front of a beautiful everglades landscape mural?!), is home to two prominent figures of the current industrial community of Broward. Resident DJ Falstaff, who hosts electronicpulse.net, spins Fridays and Saturdays while Joseph of www.abusementparkent.com provides variety, promotion, and special events on Fridays. Most other outlets in Broward are one-night events held at various locations. Promoters such as Joseph of Abusement park productions often take over these venues to bring on special events such as the "strange but beautiful" series, and "the funeral" parties which are held at the Saint once a month. The Saint on SR84 is also host to an array of fetish parties such as the one brought to you by Jayme's Wildwear. Which leads us now to what one might think is an un-related topic.

You may have to research a little to find an outlet for your particular taste in clubs in Broward, but if you're into the fetish scene, you shouldn't have any problems at all finding something to do here. In fact, it seems this county has confused or fused the term "industrial club" into meaning "fetish night." Near the Fall of 1998, in the midsts of an underground lull (what? there was a lull?) all the club staples had suddenly gone defunct, or became lame by most accounts. Though this has nothing to do with industrial or goth, there were many specialty "parties" such as fetish parties struggling to occur and, in particular, one by a clothing boutique called the Fetish Factory. Like others (such as the Fetish Box and Gregore's Rubber Room & Eroticville Theater at Squeeze) they hosted an occasional fetish-party, very much in the footsteps of London's "The Torture Garden" in the hopes of generating business for their unique shop. They found themselves at club Manray, home to "Sin," the hippest thing happening at the time, though in desperate need of a little spicing up. As fate would have it, the dress-code only events appealed to the outlet-hungry goth/industrial undergrounders, allowing the now-coined Alter-ego parties to suddenly reach a new plateau. This is vaguely where the cross-over occurred. The freaks came out from all over, some to enjoy the mixture of drum & bass, industrial, and gothic provided by DJs such as Mr. Mendez, then later long-time underground DJ Danny Bled, some to take advantage of the costume dress code (to comfortably be themselves) some to people watch, and all others to live out their perverted fantasies on the toys provided throughout the club. Though originally having very little to do with the industrial culture, the Alter Ego parties should certainly be credited for having quite an impact on our scene and on others as well. Things may never be the same around these parts (i.e., you will never be able to walk into any underground club here without having to see some latex-clad kids in the corner



Former members of Pod, Paul of X-Vortex, enigma Eric, and Fade of Still Life Decay



Nightlife gurls at Manray south and artist and Galerie Macabre owner Lady Vanessa



Promoter KioV at Religion, 1997 outfit by artists Colin & Sas Christian



Joseph (abusementpartENT) and clan at UpScene in Riverwalk, Ft. Lauderdale

spanking each other) the Alter Ego parties have recently moved to Miami due to the strict liquor, age, and nightlife laws in Broward but event info is still generated through their home base, the Fetish Factory located next to their new shoe store "Strut" on Oakland Park Blvd in Ft. Lauderdale. People travel from all over the world to attend the famous Alter Ego parties, but if you're lazy, it's no taboo to publicly flaunt your sexual confusion in any of the Broward industrial/goth clubs (it's old news 'round here). Some other notable shops in Broward are The Mosh Pit, Uncle Sam's music store, Jimmy Star's "flagship," Tate's Comics, of course we have a Hot Topic, and thrift stores galore!

Upwards and onward we move into Palm Beach County which seems an entity all it's own. Respectable's is still (after 14 years!) host to the industrial underground. It is most notable for the variety of live shows it offers, from local to well-known artists in many genres. Respectable's is located at Okeechobee Blvd in West Palm Beach, almost at the heart of the world renown glitzy shopping area for the filthy rich. For shopping however, you may want to check out Euro-tique for rubberwear, corsets, and boots. And, if you're into vintage, one of the most unique places to visit in Palm Beach is Le Sepulchre, a large store in Lakeworth catering to the underground tastes of goths and punks alike.

As far as musical acts are concerned, well that would be a book unto its own to cover. Not only has industrial music merged with so many styles over the past decade (such as rock, rap, techno, and mainstream) it has veered into many new directions that its modern definition is not as clear as in the past. Industrial music fans and musicians may disagree on what in today's world of computer generated music can be considered industrial or not. But there is something for the veterans of all tastes in S. Florida. I'd guess that every 5 out of 10 clubgoers is a musician of some sort. For the most part the electronic musicians of South Florida (who are many indeed) are home-based solo recording artists or collaborators who don't seek live performances. There are definitely your share of industrial bands who do play live shows though. To name a few are: Deadstar Assembly, DPX, Fainting in Coils, the Necrophiles, and Gods and Monsters, who can currently be seen often on our local stages, such as the Factory (Ft. Lauderdale), the Culture Room (Ft. Lauderdale), Freez (Ft. Lauderdale) Ovation (Delray), and Respectable's (West Palm). To hear some of the music generating from the darkside of sunny Florida you can go online to a page such as:

www.mp3.com/stations/shovel
You may be pleasantly surprised at what you hear! You may also be surprised to learn that some of your own favorite bands are based right here, or started up here in South Florida.

Immortal2002



SCENE SPOT

Australia

By j. citizen

Background Trivia

While Australia is about the same size as mainland U.S. (minus Alaska) it has a population of only 20 million people. That's because most of Australia is arid scrub and desert - the "outback." There are only 5 cities with populations over 1 million and about 10 towns with populations over 100,000. (By the way, the capital city is Canberra, not Sydney, despite what so many in the US insist). The larger cities are all very far apart. The closest are about a 12-hour drive from each other.

In other words, touring as a band and trying to establish a following, especially whilst doing non-mainstream music, is daunting. In fact, many just throw their hands up in the air and don't bother. Some move overseas (eg., JG Thirlwell [Foetus], Nick Cave & the Birthday Party). Others remain and try to make the most of it. Mind you, it's not all that bad, each city has strong music and arts scenes, it's just a long long way to the other cities. Australian artists can only fantasize about what it must be like for artists in Europe or parts of the U.S. who can just jump in a van and, within a several-hour drive, there are numerous large cities and tens of millions of people.

Nonetheless, the great spaces within Australia, the lack of people, and the isolation from the rest of the world all yield many benefits overall.

The Early Days of Industrial

From Sydney, SPK are credited with kick-starting industrial music in Australia (and worldwide alongside acts like Throbbing Gristle) in the late 1970s with a series of vinyl 7 inches with photocopied sleeves. The SPK project evolved from harsh screechy industrial-punk, through abstract noisescapes, EBM, gothic-industrial, ambient, and lastly, horrid top 40 dance-pop. Early live shows featured banging metal percussion, the band dressed in strange suits of armor, projected footage rang-

When you think of countries that are closely identified with industrial music, Australia probably doesn't spring to your mind. However, Australian artists and technicians actually played a leading role in the foundation of industrial and electronic music in the 1970s and 1980s. SPK, Foetus (JG Thirlwell) and Severed Heads are probably the best known of these early artists. As for equipment, it might surprise you to discover that the first digital sampler, the Fairlight CMI, was created in Sydney.

This article contains a brief history of Australian industrial as well as a report on the current rivet-head scene here: artists, labels, zines, clubs, radio, and related websites.

To kick things off though, here is some trivia that reveals the challenges placed on Australian artists and labels by geographic isolation and a small local population.

ing from pornography to autopsies and, on stage, fresh sheep's heads on lecterns - gradually decimated by the vocalist's scalpel and spat onto the audience. Hmm, charming. Or perhaps not, depending on your state of mental health. Apparently, much of this had some sort of political point to make about fascism, body politics, and lookism, etc. In any case, SPK (with the eventual loss of most original members, legend has it some were institutionalized) moved on from being perhaps the most extreme and shocking band on the planet, to complete commercial sell-out. SPK's main-man, Graeme Revell, went on to pursue a successful career doing soundtracks for Hollywood blockbusters.

Meanwhile, from 1979 on, Severed Heads were busy making strange soundscapes of heavy EBM with synths, voice, beat-boxes, tape loops, and homemade percussion. This is best exemplified on the album *Since the Accident*. What was most revolutionary about them, however, was the incorporation of a visual aspect - the synthesis and projection of their homemade videos live. It seems they were one of the very first, if not the first, to do this. Severed Heads eventually also moved into making more accessible music. See www.sevcom.com for more information (or check out the Severed Heads article in this issue -Ed).

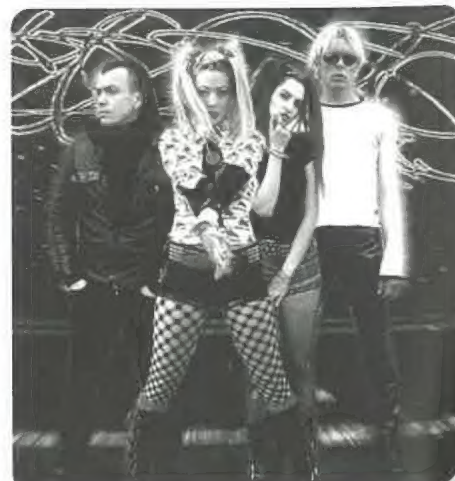
From Melbourne, JG Thirlwell (Foetus), figured that Australia wasn't big enough for artists making extreme music. And so off he went overseas, like so many others. For more information see: www.foetus.org

Industrials' Big Influence on Popular Australian Music of the Early 1980s

Elements of industrial music and imagery featured very strongly in popular Australian music of the early 1980s; much more so than equivalently popular acts from the U.K. and U.S. (well, the ones that were known here). For example, on their hugely popular 1982 album *10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1*, Midnight Oil showcased the earliest (that I know of) and one of the most powerful blends of industrial-electro-politico-rock. Similarly, another popular group, Hunters & Collectors began their early-80s career (*Self-Titled*, *Fireman's Curse*) with a strong industrial element: wasteland-desert imagery and raw, tribalistic, emotive songs similar to the sounds explored later by groups such as Einstürzende Neubauten. Various other groups such as The Models experimented with early industrialish-electro-pop (eg. 1983's *The Pleasure of your Company*). There were many lesser known groups who shunned the standard pop-rock formats, opting instead for a heavy focus on percussion, bass, raw vocals and mechanical electronics with a mix of industrialish imagery and apparel.



EYE



TDM

The Late 1980s and Early 1990s

Unfortunately, the fat-cat pop of the mid- to late-1980s swept all this industrial goodness aside. Consequently, popular awareness of Australia's industrialish music diminished greatly.

The best-known industrial project of the late 80s was NO. Their music sounds a bit like Alien Sex Fiend with the voice of Ollie Olsen (the granddaddy of Australian electronic music) howling a range of politically-inspired lyrics over the top.

A few years later, in 1992, Snog appeared with their hit "Corporate Slave." But it took quite a while for many of us to realize they were from Melbourne (Australia). Why? Because they were released on a German label, with no indication of their heritage. In fact, for quite a while, Snog could only be bought in Australia via import!

Music Industry Support - Not Much

This highlights another major problem for Australian artists. The Australian music industry is reluctant to invest and support local projects overall, let alone those who are even just a little bit quirky. It's much cheaper to flood the market with imported US and UK megastars that have already been developed with foreign money. This is also the case in other arts.

On the other hand, Australian artists have a relatively hard time gaining recognition overseas due to geographic isolation. Touring overseas involves large sums of money that could be better used for sensible investments such as buying a house.

Nevertheless, there are in fact many artists releasing great industrial music at present. There are also several small labels.

Contemporary Artists and Bands:

As space allows me to discuss only a handful of the many contemporary artists, I'll first mention the Primary website at <http://primary.edw.com.au/>. It's the best resource database on Australian artists making industrial, darkwave, gothic, and related genres.

David Thrussell's Snog and Black Lung are the best known projects. Occasionally, he even takes them on a tour to the 3 or 4 major cities. I'm assuming you probably already know a fair bit about these projects, so I shan't dwell on them here.

A recent ground-breaker is Sydney band Jerk. They're on the metal-industrial side of the fence and were co-founded by Lamar Lowder, who was in the original line-up of Powerman 5000. Because of their heavy-riffing-guitars and full-guitar-band set-up (alongside crunchy electronic beats and synths) Jerk's

music is very accessible to the large metal audience. They play live a lot and have recently signed to a major label. See www.jerkmusic.com

One of the best known of Australia's do-it-yourself projects is Canberra's EYE. Since the early 1990s they've released music on cassette, CD, video, CDR and over 40 international compilation CDs. They've evolved from harsh industrial cyber-punk through theatre-soundtrack-noisescapes to incorporate influences such as punk, drum & bass, digital hardcore, and hip-hop over an industrial EBM base. Recent recordings feature the female vocals of DvaDg, originally from the U.S. Continuing an Australian and industrial tradition, EYE's music is very political and topical - often much more explicit, informative, and humorous than most such acts. They receive a lot of airplay on community radio stations around the country. See www.eyenote.com. EYE's electro-tech-d&b side-project, ELF, is also quite well-known, playing live regularly. See www.elfmusic.com

Another long-running self-released project is Melbourne's TDM. They began in the early 1990s under the name Tedium. Early live shows featured confronting performance art and tribal experimental industrial sounds. They've evolved over 3 albums from that through angsty industrial-goth-techno-rock to their recent incarnation as alternative-electronica-pop with an industrial edge - almost reminiscent of VAST, though more mature and darker. They tour occasionally and have potential to be hugely popular. See www.alphalink.com.au/tdm

For those into the metal-industrial side of things, the Sydney band New Project are aiming big. They have recruited the production talents of Andy Reilly and James Barclay-Gall, who have produced for Cubanate, Die Krupps, and Gary Numan. They play live regularly and remind me of heavier Killing Joke and White Zombie mixed with Fear Factory. For more information visit: www.newprojectonline.com

Melbourne is also the home of Tankt. A relatively new project, they're starting to make big waves here and overseas. They've released 2 CDs in quick succession, showcasing their unique and refreshing twist on EBM. They're a bit like a modern Nitzer Ebb with a more darkwave edge; a trio incorporating two keyboardists/programmers and two vocalists. Tankt have also been brave and committed enough to tour the east-coast (with success!) and are looking to take themselves on a tour of Europe. For more information visit: www.tankt.com.au

Elenor Raynor, who plays synths live for Snog, is the brain behind the project Sobriquet. It's another project that has toured regularly. Through 3 CDs Sobriquet has traversed through industrial-rock, electronica-dance, electro and is now seated in femme-fatale industrial-goth-pop-rock mode. This is despite previously achieving considerable notoriety and success in the much much larger electronica market. Elenor also played in one of the best known industrial groups from the early 1990s, Soulscraper. For more information visit: www.sobriquet.org

The above are my picks of the most active and well-known of the current crop. In brief, some other worthy notables include Sydney's Jekyll Switch (storming industrial-rock, like a modern Big Black, one of the best groups I've witnessed live, but currently undergoing lineup changes), Perth's Celly (cyber-pop-darkwave) and Up Syndrome (adventurous electronics from club-stompers to ambience), Canberra's SysX (powernoise techno destruction) and DJ Citizen (glitchcore powernoise), Adelaide's VNB (cyber-trip-dance), alongside Sydney's Screaming Age (electro-industrial meets heavy rock), and Sydney's Storm and Serenity (EBM crossed with 70s progressive rock!).

Perhaps the best introduction to many of these artists is the new "A.S.I.N.G.E.D." (Australian Synthpop Industrial Noise Gothic Electro Darkwave) compilation CD. It's available from Blatant Propaganda and Ground Under Productions (see the label list below).

I've covered only those artists making the types of music most often associated, these days, with the term "industrial." There are many more making noises on the industrial fringes of electronica eg. "glitchcore," dark drum & bass, and noise. You can come across many of these artists via the labels listed below.

Industrial Record Labels

Ground Under Productions (GUP) - www.gup.net.au
Originally a local distributor for well-known U.S. and European industrial-goth-dance labels, GUP has recently begun to release material by Australian artists. These include Tankt and

Sobriquet. GUP resides in Melbourne.

Blatant Propaganda www.blatantpropaganda.com
Based in Canberra, Blatant Propaganda is a grass-roots record label and distributor of industrial-electronica-d&b-darkwave-EBM-glitchcore-noise related outfits, often with a political bent. It's also an ezine of activism, culture-jamming & suppressed information. It's the home of EYE, ELF, DJ Citizen, SysX and many more. B.P. has released several compilation CDs and CDRs of Australian industrialish artists including the aforementioned "A.S.I.N.G.E.D." CD.

System Corrupt - www.systemcorrupt.com
From Sydney, this collective-label brings together some of the most exciting industrial breakcore power noise and mega-distorted splatter techno around. Their scene is totally independent of the goth-industrial club scene and can most often be caught at free parties in obscure locations.

Bloody Fist - www.bloodyfist.com.au
Based in the industrial-port city of Newcastle, this label has been going strong for almost 10 years, releasing a large range of vinyl industrial breakcore and hardcore gabber techno destruction. The founder, Mark N, DJs frequently along the east coast,



Club "Dominion" in Perth



Club "Dominion" in Perth

mainly at noisier-dance events - the noises he churns out blow all traditional industrial-goth-club DJs off the floor and back into the 1980s. Like System Corrupt, the events organized by Bloody Fist are much closer to true industrial such as SPK, Throbbing Gristle, NON etc. than what you get in sceney clubs (which seem like retro clubs for old folk in comparison).

Embryo Recordings - www.embryorecordings.com
In Melbourne, this label ranges from the ambient drones of Solar to the abstract glitch-beat of TSS and the industrial-doom-metal-noise drones of Halo (who recently signed to Relapse Records and toured the U.S.).

Dorobo Records - <http://home.mira.net/dorobo/>

Also in Melbourne, this label mainly releases ambient, moody electronic, cinematic-type projects such as Shinjuku Thief.

Cranial Fracture Recordings - www.fracture.ar.com.au
In Sydney, brand-spanking new with a debut double CD. Cranial Fracture focuses on noise, dark ambient, and darkwave music.

INDUSTRIAL RADIO:

The most significant radio station in Australia for alternative music is the Government's nation-wide youth station, JJJ. However, generally, it is "alternative radio" which plays major-label releases. Thus, for nearly all Australian and overseas industrial artists, airplay on JJJ isn't very likely. The exceptions are those artists who have enough guitars and "testosterone" to get on the heavy metal show. JJJ only very rarely plays Snog, for instance.

Nevertheless, we thankfully have hundreds of Community Radio Stations across Australia. These are staffed by volunteers and are generally very supportive of truly alternative music and viewpoints. In some of the big cities community stations out-rate the Government's JJJ. There are, however, only about ten community radio shows around Australia which specifically focus on industrial-related music. These range in scope from those who play mostly industrial-gothic-dance to those which play experimental-industrial-avant-garde. You can find a link-list of their websites at www.teknet.net.au/eye/links/radio/

Industrial Night Clubs

For those into what some would term "true" industrial (ie. noisier experimentalism), the most exciting industrial events are those which are completely independent of the club scene - events most often hosted by the aforementioned System Corrupt and Bloody Fist labels. Expect lots of ear-blistering distortion, music you've never heard before (or mutated in new ways), disturbing video footage, general intensity with lots of friendly people. Don't expect to see any club-scene-goths there!

As for the club scene in Australia, as in most countries, industrial is intertwined with the gothic scene. The hybridization of the music and aesthetic of these club genres has reached such a point here (and I suspect worldwide) that many people on the scene are confused as to which contemporary music is industrial and which is gothic. Maybe it's neither. The music referred to, to my mind, is predominantly club-techno with a variety of influences from new romantic, and less dominantly, industrial, EBM, and gothic, or it is post-glam-metal with an industrial-goth aesthetic.

Apart from that, what can you expect to find at the clubs here? Some clubs focus on DJs and filling the dancefloor with the predictable hits. Other clubs, however, are much more adventurous and a lot more fun. They include regular bands and performance art pieces. Some even shun gothic music altogether and focus on past and contemporary flavors of "industrial."

How do the clubs here compare with those overseas? Well, my only experience with overseas clubs are some in Newark and San Diego. To me, the people dressed and otherwise looked pretty much the same as I would expect to find in an Australian club. But with the exception that, in place of a few African-Americans there, here you'll find a few Asian-Australians. The music was pretty much the same, apart from a few differences in regards to a track here and there by locally-known, but internationally unknown artists.

If you're planning a trip to Australia, the best web-site to consult about clubs is www.gothic.net.au/cityscene/ for a city by city breakdown and calendar of what's on. But for something more special and more industrial, I'd contact some of the aforementioned labels to find out if any events are coming up.

Industrial Zines

Whilst there was a flood of Australian industrial zines in the mid-90s, there haven't been any for a long time. Blatant Propaganda released several zines in the late 90s with reviews of mostly self-released artists. However, the paper zine has retired to the www.blatantpropaganda.com website.

A new face on the horizon is "Gothic Nation." I'm confused as to why they've given the zine that genre name, when most of the artists interviewed and reviewed are more industrial than gothic. It seems the editors are catering to modern youth's (aforementioned) confusion as to what music best fits under what pigeonhole. You can contact this zine via the GUP record label (website above).

There you go. A run-down of industrial music in Australia.

New Project

Noisex. It equals noise plus sex.

Despite the obvious pun, the fusion of noise and sex is the real driving force behind this powernoise outfit. Noise and sex make the world go 'round, so to speak. From the synco-pated rhythm of driving, inorganic beats to the distorted percussion of a body's most intimate acts, these two forces propel the body to move, make the body get up and enjoy itself.

Noisex released its first tapes in 1992. Since then, Raoul Rotation (as Noisex) has released six full-length CDs and 2 EPs (one of which is available only in a special boxset). Noisex has brought its own blend of noisy electronics and powerful rhythms to many a concert — including large European festivals and two US tours. After playing at one of Europe's larger festivals this year (InFest), Raoul Rotation has decided that the touring needs to stop, that studio work needs more attention.

IN: What has influenced the decision to stop performing live? Will there still be US shows in 2003?

RR: I've tried to reduce doing shows for about 5 years — it didn't work. Most of my free time I was on tour and, besides, I had to produce my albums. I recognized that I definitely need more time for the studio work.

My decision was to stop live shows in order to have more time in the studio. It is still hard to stop but I'll be back in the US in 2003 because of the cancellation this year. It wasn't anybody's fault!

IN: What do you do for holiday to decompress from the musical pursuits?

RR: I haven't had holidays for ages! No time to relax (another reason to stop [touring and doing live shows]).

IN: Some people would think that a life of touring



By: Brian Clarkson

IndustrialnationN got to chat with Raoul (thanks to the wonders of the Internet) after his appearance at InFest to discuss the project, the strains of touring, and all sorts of things.

around the world would be the perfect life. Why would you want to sacrifice that to go back into the studio and work in what some would think is a static environment?

RR: is great but don't forget all the stress and pressure. And you have to take the time to work in the studio to make it happen! Actually, I have my own interpretation of quality and if there isn't enough time to reach it — I'm just dissatisfied with the result! Basically I'm doing music for my own! Maybe, if I'm satisfied again — I'll be back! Who knows!

IN: Is there anything specific about touring that you don't like?

RR: NO!

IN: Are there parts of touring and doing live shows that you think you'll miss?



<http://www.IndustrialnationN.com>

in@ripco.com

INDUSTRIALNATION

NOISEX

RR: YES! (meeting interesting people)

IN: What gives you the drive and inspiration to produce, and to continue producing, music?

RR: That's my life! I'm inspired be everything all time! The power I'm taking of my fans!!!!!!

IN: Some of your musical influences (Esplendor Geometrico, Throbbing Gristle, etc.) could be considered somewhat obscure. How did you find that music early on?

RR: At the age of 10, I started learning piano at music school. After 5 years, I was bored and I entered the alternative scene. I was so amazed by the experimental-noise music and I bought my first synth (a KORG DS 8) and started making experiments with sounds.

IN: How did you enter the 'alternative scene'? How did you find it? What was your first introduction to it?

RR: I just met some freaks which introduced me to it! I was really impressed by that bizarre culture.

IN: How do you think the early piano training you had has influenced or helped the music you do now?

RR: Not in practice but for the feeling.

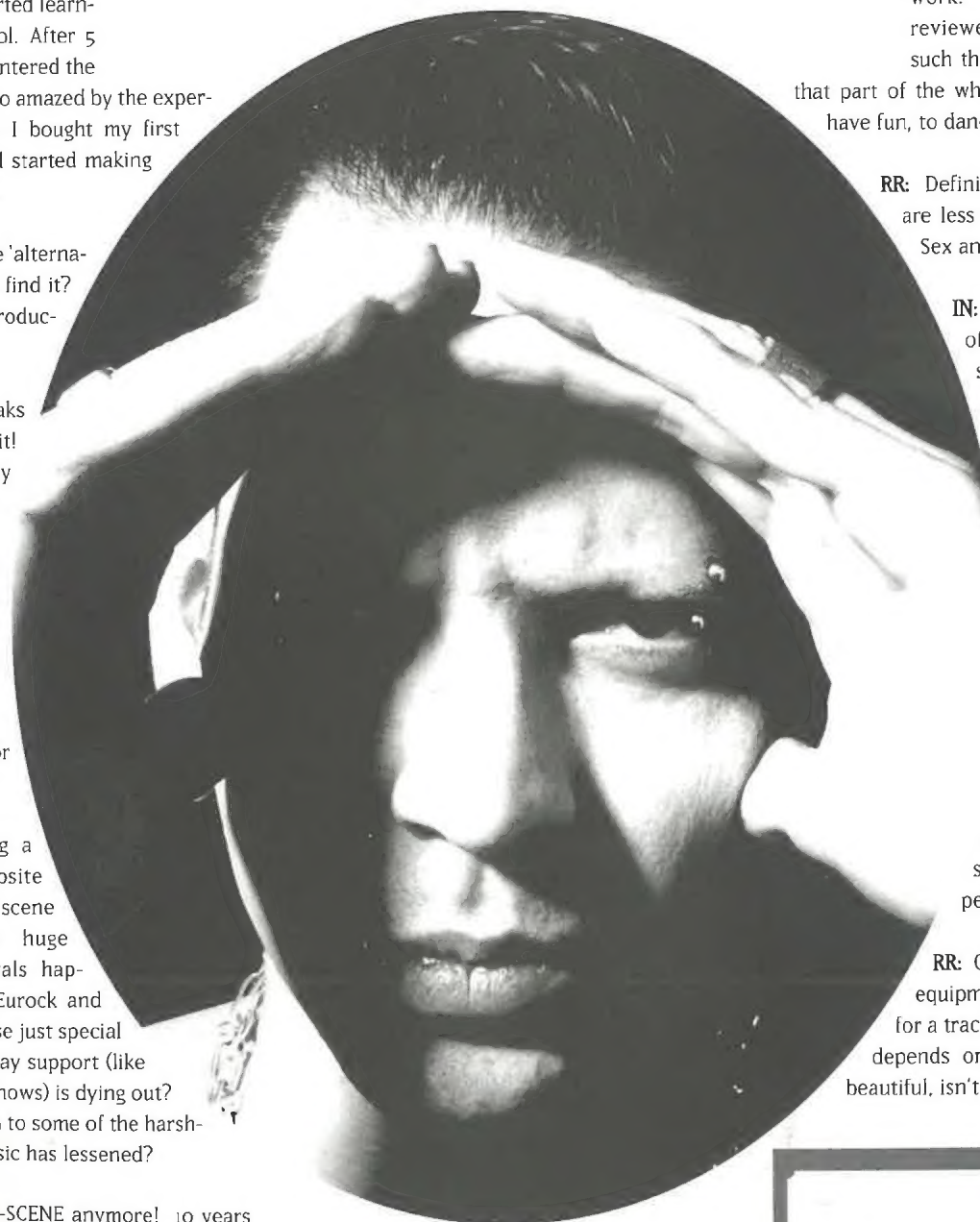
IN: I remember seeing a comment on the website about there being no scene left, but I also see huge electro/industrial festivals happening in Europe (like Eurock and Maschinenfest). Are these just special events, and the day-to-day support (like club nights and regular shows) is dying out? Or is it that the reception to some of the harsher side of 'industrial' music has lessened?

RR: I meant NO ACTIVE-SCENE anymore! 10 years ago ... you can't compare it to now. The result is, there are huge festivals which are interesting for the scene. For example: when I came into the scene, as a fan I booked bands by myself to see them playing live. Believe me, these events were the best to me!

IN: What do you think could be done to fix it?

RR: More communication as well promoters should work more together than against each other.

Life is Noise, Sex and lots of FUN!!!



in general, I'm doing, with my father, an art gallery and a digital art print-studio (www.art-active.de). Altogether This takes all my time plus having SEX!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

IN: Is Groupieshock another conceptual album, like the book ideas of *Over and Out*?

RR: No, *Groupieshock* is mostly FUN! No concept behind except to say I'm stopping live shows! Hahaha!

IN: There is a lot of humor (word-play, the condom insert) in your work. Do you think that fans, reviewers, and interviewers take such things too seriously and forget that part of the whole musical experience is to have fun, to dance, to enjoy oneself?

RR: Definitely YES! Even most of them are less open minded. Life is Noise, Sex and lots of FUN!!!

IN: What goes into the creation of a Noisex album? Is there some initial concept that gets pushed to completion, or is the process just spur of the moment?

RR: Right, it is the process which builds a Noisex track and finally an album! It always depends in which mood I'm at the moment!

IN: Do you have a large collection of equipment and sound samples, or do you prefer to work with a smaller set of things and see what happens?

RR: Ok, now, I have collected some equipment but I'm using smaller sets for a track. I'm changing sometimes. It depends on my mood as well! Less is beautiful, isn't it?

For more information on Raoul Rotation & Noisex, access the official website at:

www.noisex.net

<http://www.IndustrialNation.com>

IN BYTEZ

pneumatic detach

By Kyronfive

IN Bytez is a new section for IndustrialNation. Here, we will introduce readers to bands on the market with one record out poised and ready to make an impression on the unsuspecting masses. IN Bytez is an opportunity to meet the bands which will become ones to watch. Tune in now and be that annoying person overheard shouting 'I knew about this band a year ago' when the heard of recently clued-in clubbers stampedes the dancefloor.

Call it powernoise, hardcore, or electronic experimental music: In-your-face, hammering, noise-fueled beats having been rising in popularity in the industrial masses since, well, Throbbing Gristle, but more recently with the inception European labels such as Ant-Zen or Hands. Standing in opposition to this mostly Euro-based movement is a recent crop of US-based noise artists. Utilizing less-Teutonic, more varied beat structures and styles than your average Europowernoiser, US bands such as Antigen Shift, Navicon Torture Technologies, and, of course, Pneumatic Detach have developed a sound that has put them firmly on the Global Noise map. Based in Boston, Pneumatic Detach's Justin Brink has been successful enough to sell out the runs of both of his demos and his first record (released on Frozen Empire Media) in only a short period of time. With a split release with Antigen Shift and a remix CD on the way, Pneumatic Detach is poised to make a lot of noise in the US industrial scene.

IN: Tell us a little bit about who comprises Pneumatic Detach and how it came about.

Brink: Pneumatic Detach in the studio is myself (Justin Brink). Live, I like to work with various people to keep things new and to work off of different people's energy. As far as how Pneumatic Detach came about, I started creating music 8 or 9 years ago. I went through a long evolution process until I came up with the sound I was looking for. Some of my original songs may have sounded much like something off of Brap. My first show ever was opening for SMP in an art gallery in Boston.

IN: How would you describe your sound to someone who's never heard of you?

Brink: I would probably say: industrial/electronic/noisy beat-oriented song structure.

IN: According to your website, your demos and your first release (on Frozen Empire Media) is sold out. How can people get a hold of your music? Any plans for upcoming releases?

Brink: Correct, if someone is looking for one of the actual releases from Frozen Empire Media I am afraid they are all gone. Even myself, I have only one copy that I am afraid of losing. But I am trying to get the CD re-released to have something out there for people before the next few releases.

IN: One thing that makes Pneumatic Detach stand out from other bands of the same ilk is that you seem to use organic-sounding instruments. Is that intentional?

Brink: Absolutely, there is something about getting a drum machine and trying to tweak the patches so they sound cool of different that just does not work for me. In all music it is like a recipe, the better ingredients you start with the better the final product should be. In my opinion, you need to create something from scratch otherwise someone can walk into a music store play a demo song on some keyboard and hear the same thing. Most of my tricks lie in using my Nord Lead 1, MS2000, Virus, JP8000 trying to create unusual frequencies and sampling various sections at a high bit rate and use those for my licks, rhythms, grooves, breaks, etc. Also gathering various sounds from where ever to chop them up and use for whatever.

IN: Powernoise (for lack of a better term, call the genre 'people who make noisy music you can dance to,' if you like) has gotten a lot of attention in the US, but mostly through labels such as Ant-Zen and Hands. US bred and born Powernoise (for lack of a better term) seems to be upstaged by our European counterparts. Do you see a powernoise/experimental/noisy-dancy stuff/etc revolution happening in America?

Brink: Sure I would definitely say there is a burst of interest in the so called genre. Most IDM artists aren't doing much that is that ground breaking. But there are a few that stand out. People want something new sounding that they can groove to at the same time. I think most "Powernoise" handles that pretty well.

IN: I know you played a festival in Rhode Island earlier this year. Any plans to tour?



Brink: I would love to but the right situation needs to present itself. Time off from work, etc. Who knows, maybe if I am lucky I will get fired from my job, flip out, pack all my shit in a van and go.

IN: You reference several different genres on *Par Es Ses* – the aforementioned powernoise (for lack of a better term), drum & bass, dark ambient, etc. Do you like the flexibility of whatever happens to strike your mood? Ever plan to do a side-project devoted to one specific style?

Brink: Yes, I want to do something different, mixing different genres and styles. I don't like to be locked into a set thing. Mood is definitely the heart of the creation process, some of my favorite tracks were written after I have been up for 24 to 30 hours, when you reach the edge.

As far as a side project I would want to do something along the lines of more technical, glitchy, bassy song structure. But at the same time do something that hasn't been done before.

IN: What's coming up next for Pneumatic Detach?

Brink: In the works for Pneumatic Detach, hopefully some live shows in the Boston area. Dates undecided at the moment a show with Antigen Shift and C2 and another show opening for Black Lung.

As far as CDs go I have planned a split CD with Detritus, a split CD with Antigen Shift, a remix CD with a good line up of artists such as Navicon Torture Technologies, Battery Cage, Symbiont, Scrap eds, Uner Null, Krept Krept, Immaculate Grotesque, Detritus, Nau-zee-aun and a few others. I am really hoping there will be a wide variety of sounds that come out of this CD, from harsh noise to Suicide Commando-style dance tracks. With a few guest vocal appearances. Then, hopefully, a full length CD.

For more information on Pneumatic Detach, please visit:
<http://www.pneumaticdetach.com>
<http://www.syntheticcreations.com>
<http://www.frozenempiremedia.com>

IN BYTEZ

INDUSTRIALNATION

NOISEX

INDUSTRIALNATION

With a sound that fuses elements of Synthpop and Electro, Simulator couldn't be more suited for today's club scene. Simulator's Ross Beall has been crafting his dancefloor connection for little over 3 years, culminating in this year's release of his first LP *Enter The Unknown* on Cohaagen Music, a label fronted by synth-poppers Ganymede. Utilizing soothing melodies, mellow beats, and a small selection of guest vocalists (notably Brand New Idol vocalist Frank J. Freda), *Enter The Unknown* bridges the gap between emotive Synthpop and the more dancefloor-friendly breed of Electro.

IN: Let's start with this: who is Simulator and what is the history behind the band?

Beall: I would first like to thank you for this opportunity that you've offered me - I appreciate it very much.

Simulator is an all-electronic mostly instrumental solo project, with an overall sound influenced by many forms of electronic music (synthpop/dark-wave to EBM/technoid-rhythm/industrial to IDM and experimental). On occasion, the project will include guest vocalists that will help widen the spectrum of sound and accessibility. As for the history of Simulator, around the middle of '99, I started programming and further developing on the actual sound style of Simulator, with a track having some of the influential elements of the various aforementioned sound styles, and the result is the song "Regression" (found on *Enter the Unknown*). With the creation and finalization of "Regression", Simulator officially started.

IN: How would you describe your sound to someone who's never heard of you?

Beall: The music I write usually combines sound design and song structuring similar to some of the sound styles mentioned before. Most folks who enjoy EBM/electro-industrial and synthpop would most likely enjoy Simulator.

IN: Your first record, *Enter The Unknown*, was just released on Cohaagen Music. How did that come about?

Beall: The offer for *Enter the Unknown* came about after I had worked with Patrick and Dave of Cohaagen, by my having done a remix for them for their music project Ganymede some months earlier. (I remixed the track "Legacy", and it appears on their *Falling* EP). They contacted me with an offer this past Christmas season, in that they would release my debut album, of which at least two songs on the album, be vocal-based.

IN: Can you tell us a little about the other people that worked on *Enter The Unknown*? And how has the reception to the record been?

Beall: First and foremost - my wife Leah, she has been a tremendous help in many ways, but particularly she provided the much appreciated help of listening subjectively and providing ideas and alternatives to various parts of the creation and mix down process.

George Cicci (Singularity-Studios.com) has provided an invaluable amount of time and effort for this release, either through aid in production, or information about production, the mix-down (and additional production) of the two bonus tracks, of which the last track on the CD, Rachel Cicci, (his wife) features vocals.

Frank J. Freda (ex-Brand New Idol) has featured lyrics, vocals and assisted with the production on "Divided", "The Ghost of You" and "Revelation - Epiphany Mix". I sincerely appreciate his time and effort with this release.

I am very fortunate to have received quite a few all-positive reviews from folks, and I would like to take a moment to sincerely thank everyone who has offered these much-appreciated comments and feedback - thank you.



simulator

IN: Any plans to tour in the near future?

Beall: I am sorry, no, not at this time.

IN: It seems like the US is going through a synthpop revival at present. Do you feel like you are a part of this? Do you think it will benefit what you are doing?

Beall: I am fortunate and very happy there seems to be increasing interest with Simulator. Though I don't specifically write synthpop music, (not by definition anyways), I'm not sure if I'm part of this revival or not. Folks who enjoy much of yester-year's synthesizer based electronic pop, as well as more recent synthpop, might inadvertently learn of Simulator through learning of the many bands writing synthpop music today, and that would be fantastic!

IN: What do you listen to in your spare time?

Beall: Mostly electronic music of varying sound styles. Specifically - Depeche Mode / Recoil, Covenant, AND ONE, Front 242, cEvin Key / Download, Rhys Fulber (Conjure One), Boards of Canada, Autechre, MESH, NETZ, Perfidious Words, VNV Nation, Apophygna Berzerk, Front Line Assembly / Noise Unit and Converter. Once in a while, I'll listen to some guitar-based bands such as: Killing Joke, The Misfits and Fear Factory.

IN: What's the future of Simulator looking like?

Beall: At the moment, I'm working on some remix projects for ArtOfFact Records and DSBP, with just having finished remix projects for A Different Drum, DSBP and Cohaagen Music. Once I'm completed with these remix projects, I'll begin working on a follow up to *Enter the Unknown*, (while still taking on remix projects during the same time, should requests come in).

For more information, please visit <http://www.simulator-music.com/>

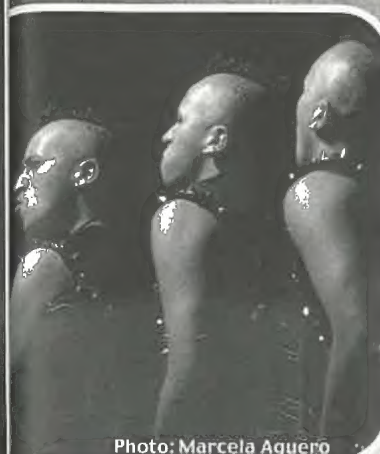


Photo: Marcela Aguero

HOCICO



Photo: Marcela Aguero

Interview by
Rabbit von Hasenpfucker, Esq.
Intro by Kyronfive

Mexico City is, perhaps, not the first destination that comes to mind when pondering industrial music hotspots. Despite this, Mexico City is home to Hocico, one of the newest and brightest faces of EBM. On a mission to revitalize the EBM scene with their unique mix of searing beats and grave predominately Spanish vocals, Hocico has proven themselves in the past 5 years to be a force to be reckoned with.

In the late 80's, cousins Erk Aicrag and Racso Agroyam began their earliest sonic experiments, using a variety of low-tech instruments including tape recorders, simple keyboards, and homemade instruments. These early experiments made way for what we know as Hocico to emerge in 1992. Upgrading their equipment, as well as their aspirations, Erk and Racso began work on early demos and live shows, started a coalition (now defunct) for Mexico City electronic artists known as *The Corporation*, and, in 1997,

released their first album, *Odio Bajo El Alma*, on the Opcion Sonica label. Since then, Hocico has released several records and live CD's, including *Sangre Hirviente* and the ultra-rare *Los Hijos Del Infierno* live LP.

2002 has been a banner year for Hocico. In addition to playing dozens of live shows in Mexico and abroad, Hocico has inked a new deal with Metropolis Records, who are also releasing domestically their *Signos De Aberracion* LP (originally on Out Of Line in Germany) and bringing out their brand new single, entitled *Ladykiller*. A US tour, their first ever, is also in the works. With such successes in mind, IndustrialNation's venerable four-legged reporter, Rabbit von Hasenpfucker, Esq., sat down with Erk at a recent show in Tijuana, Mexico, to discuss music, politics, and just what the hell the word 'hocico' really means.

IN: Tell us a little bit about the origins of Hocico.

Erk: Hocico started back in 1993. When Racso and me, two hardcore punk and electronic music freaks, took serious the idea of forming a band to satisfy our own needs of music. Prior to forming Hocico we experimented with homemade instruments and unprofessional keyboards. With all this we started to record songs and little by little we produced our first demo tapes.

IN: How and where did both of you meet?

Erk: We are cousins and have always shared personal experiences and musical tastes, so Hocico is just part of this.

IN: When did you decide to start making music together?

Erk: We started to experiment with sounds using whatever we had in our hands around 1988-89. Racso had a protasound keyboard and my father had just bought me my first tape recorder, which I used for singing as a microphone. Ever since I can remember, we always wanted to have a band.

IN: Why EBM/Industrial?

Erk: Because it represented exactly how we felt in those days. It was a rebel yell for our lives. It contained the rhythm, the words, and charge of energy that we needed. We used to listen to a lot of hardcore punk, but after listening to the hard side of the electronic music we were obsessed with it.

IN: What was the deciding factor that drove you to make such a culturally divergent sound and style of music than one that is more widely accepted, yet still considered "underground" in Mexico, like rock en español or even metal? Those styles seem to have a larger market out there than EBM/Industrial.

Erk: In those days we just hated the rock en español scene. We just felt attracted to the electronic sound due to its wide resources of creativity, even if we didn't know how to use a synth. Forming a band with hard electronic sound was a real alternative to create something new for our ears.

IN: Was it difficult for both of you to find not only a label to sign to, but to get shows booked in venues that catered to that genre of music [EBM/Industrial]?

Erk: It wasn't so hard to book shows. We were lucky in the beginning of our career. In the early 90's there were a lot of places open to our radical sound. We played with metal and punk bands, so we just played as much as we could and that brought the attention of our former label.

IN: What does "Hocico" mean in English and what significance does it have to your band and/or to EBM? Who came up with the name and how?

Erk: Hocico in English means "Muzzle." However, in Mexico, Hocico is a word used in a derogatory manner — to offend. "Callate el pinto Hocico" which means "shut up your fucking mouth," or "te voy a romper el Hocico" which means "I'll kick your ass" are pretty common phrases, so we took the social context of the word. In some ways we say that the word came up with us and not the other way around.

IN: Who are your biggest influences, either musically or otherwise?

Erk: Edward Artemiev, psychedelic trance, Skinny Puppy, Leather Strip, Jesus Christo, amores perros and Mexico city.

IN: What bands are you into right now?

Erk: Aslan Faction, Grendel, IC434, Dioxyde, Talamasca.

IN: Who are your five favorite artists of all time?

Erk: It isn't easy but the artists we respect are: Dwayne Goettel and cEvin key, Claus Larsen, Dominik Van Reich (yeloworC).

IN: What are your favorite styles/genres of music at the present time?

Erk: Psychedelic trance, noise, electro.

IN: At this exact moment, what CDs are in your CD player at home, in your car, at work, and/or the studio, and if you're listening to any music as you read this, what is it?

Erk: At this moment we are listening to Front 242's *Back Catalogue*. In our CD players at home there are these CDs: Haus Arafna, Suicide Commando's *Critical Stage*, X-Dream, Talamasca.

IN: What is your attitude (if any) towards the new music scene today?

Erk: There's a lot of shit out there. Now it is hard to say that somebody is really developing an original sound.

IN: How do you feel about the huge turnaround that EBM/Industrial has made within the past 5 years and how widely accepted it has become? Has it progressed? Are there too many EBM bands out there, just milking it for what it's worth? Do you think that EBM sounds too much like techno/ rave/ house music?

Erk: It's quite good that more people are into this music now than years before. It is okay to get influences from any other musical styles to renew your sound, but at the same time it's important to create an original proposal without losing the spirit of hard electronic music. It's good to use elements of the techno, but too much techno-like music becomes something too plastic, without feelings and emotions. They just try to make the people dance without putting feelings on it. Bands come and bands go every year. There are too many bands now, but most of them disappear very fast.

IN: Do you feel that EBM is expanding? Do you think that is positive or negative?

Erk: To date it's been, in most cases, positive. In the future, we don't know.

IN: Do you think EBM has strayed too far off of the path and has forgotten its "roots," or do you think it is evolving?

Erk: It has evolved for sure, there are still bands that

"What we know for sure is that if we weren't doing music we would probably be real criminals."
— Photo: Danielle



haven't forgotten the roots and the spirit of this music.

IN: Do you think EBM is adapting to the music that's in the mainstream and becoming less and less an "underground" style?

Erk: In some cases, yes, like in the future pop scene, but we still think that the hard electronic music is something very different from the mainstream.

IN: Do you think that the EBM/Industrial 'Rivethed' scene is starting to replace the gothic trend?

Erk: Both scenes have shared clubs, stages, and following for a long time. Many gothic bands have adopted the

Goblyn, Erk Aicrag, Racso Agroyam, & Rabbit in Tijuana, Mexico
— Photo: Danielle



"We just look at each other and say 'Hate and energy!' before every show."
— Photo: Danielle

electronic sound to evolve and many electronic bands have been influenced by the goth scene. Even if both scenes have different origins, in some ways gothic and hard electronic music are one scene.

IN: Do either of you frequent any clubs within the Goth/Industrial "scene?" And could you tell us what the scene in Mexico is like and how it's doing?

Erk: We usually go to a club in Mexico City called "Dadax." It is the only club [in Mexico City] devoted to this kind of music. In our city, we have an ever growing following for both scenes. Now there are more parties, more shows with international acts, and there are many more local bands.



Erk Aicrag in action at Respectable's Florida 10/24/2002
— Photo: Marcela Aguero

IN: How did you feel the first time you ever heard Hocico played outside of the studio (like in a club or on the radio)? Where was it and which song was it?

Erk: It was on a radio show back in 94, the song was "Sensacion de Letargo" from our first demo tape. The first feeling was very strange — as if that song wasn't ours. It was something really pleasant.

IN: Tell me your thoughts on mainstream music, i.e., the rap/rock phenomenon, boy bands, hip-hop; the MTV Generation, etc?

Erk: It sucks! It is just easy-to-consume music, there is no more to say.

IN: How do you remember "old school" industrial? Fondly? With Regret? Do you miss it, or are you glad that it's in the past and wish it would just stay a memory?

Erk: It was something great while we lived it, but now it is just the past. Of course it still brings good memories to us. Now the future waits.

IN: Are you into Noise (i.e., Ambient Noise, Structured Noise, Power noise, et al)?

Erk: Yes, we like the extreme side of electronic music. Dulce Liquido deals a lot with this style.

IN: Give us some insight into the notoriety Hocico has attained and your burgeoning popularity.

Erk: It is great that all this is happening around us, but this was not our first goal. The music is still the most important thing for us. Now all the Hocicones are our motivation, so making music is a double pleasure now.

IN: Are there any specific points that you're trying to express through your lyrics and/or music?

Erk: The music and lyrics express everything by themselves.

IN: Do you consider yourself political? Does Hocico have any kind of political agenda, either hidden or openly public? Do you keep up with and actively follow any of the events that are currently occurring globally and/or locally? Are there any particular issues that you're concerned with?

Erk: Even if we don't consider ourselves political, politics have a certain influence on our work. We deal with them every day. There's a lot to say about it in our country because democracy and equality are still two concepts that are very far away from most of

the population. We don't play in politically-influenced festivals because they are manipulated for people who are exactly like our government, so we have never done it. But we react in the way we know, making music and talking about our reality and the things we hate from it. The main issue we are concerned about is the situation in Chiapas in the south of our country. In Chiapas, people are living in conditions of misery far away from any benefit of the modern life.

IN: What is the significance of the samples you put in your songs?

Erk: They support the content of it. They are part of the meaning of the song.

IN: Erk, You have such a powerful and commanding stage presence, and your energy while up there is astounding. What would you say compels you the most when performing?

Erk: Playing live for me is a chance to do everything I'm limited to do in my normal life. It is a chance to release all my emotions the way I want. What compels me the most while performing is the contact with the audience. Every show is different and exciting for me.

IN: Do either of you suffer from "stage fright?" If so, how do you go about combating it?

Erk: We suffered from this just in the beginning, but we still get nervous before every show. However, now we enjoy being on stage a lot. It is one of the best experiences in life for both of us.

IN: How do you prepare yourself on the day of a gig?

Erk: We just prey [sic] a little to the Pope!!! :-)

IN: Are you superstitious? Do you have any good luck charms or rituals that you do before you can do a show?

Erk: Not really, we just look at each other and say "Hate and energy!" before every show.

IN: You guys have been playing in Europe a lot more frequently lately. Do you enjoy going on the road visiting other countries and doing shows?

Erk: It was hard at the beginning, but eventually we got used to the tours and now it is something that is entirely part of our lives. When we are on tour we miss home but when we are home we miss the tour. We are divided inside.

IN: What has been your favorite place to play so far? What show has been the most fun for you to date?

Erk: It is hard to say this because every show is different and special in some way, but we've had very special times in Mexico, Germany, and Greece.

IN: Within the last year or two, there's been a lot of confusion here in the U.S. surrounding your current Visa situation. I've heard a bunch of outlandish stories, such as: you can't get into the country because you were in a gang, you have a major criminal record, even that you once got caught trying to illegally cross the border to immigrate. Can you dispel the rumors and tell us what's really going on?

Erk: This is just shit!! We have never had the need to cross the border illegally and we have never had the need to be involved in a gang. What we know for sure is that if we weren't doing music we would probably be real criminals, but we can release almost everything with the music.

About getting the visa, I got my visa years ago, but Racso didn't. Getting a visa, for him, is a big problem. They ask for so many things to get it which Racso can't fill. Take a look online to see what a Mexican needs to get a Visa.

IN: Are there any American bands you'd particularly like to play with?

Erk: Ministry.

IN: Tell us about any side-projects that you are currently working on or pursuing:

Erk: Dulce Liquido, Racso's side project, is going to

release *Joy For Your Sins*, a new album, early next year

IN: Are there any musical styles that you'd like to explore, but haven't yet?

Erk: Not really.

IN: Are there any new side-projects forming in the not-so-distant future?

Erk: We are looking for interesting new bands, and next year we'll probably start producing some of them.

IN: How do you feel about music sharing communities like Morpheus, IRC, and the now-defunct AudioGalaxy?

Erk: We can't do anything about it... just download songs. :-)

IN: Do you think that these sites are killing the music industry?

Erk: Yes, but not in a big way, because most of the people downloading the songs are people who wouldn't ever buy your CD anyway. On the other hand, it helps you to get more exposure. We still believe that the real fans always get the original stuff, because it belongs to the band they like. Anyway, Internet addicts won't ever find everything they want to get from a band through the Internet.

IN: Your live shows are spectacular. Are you planning on releasing any more live albums in the foreseeable future?

Erk: Next year we'll release some live video tracks along with a new EP and some old tracks to celebrate the 10th

anniversary of Hocico. And there are plans of releasing a live DVD.

IN: What's in store for the future?

Erk: The *Ladykiller* Single and a new (Dulce Liquido) album.

IN: How do you feel about incorporating more Latin/Hispanic cultural influences into Hocico?



Rasco Agroyam with fans Sandy and Angelina at Respectable Streets in FL
- Photo: Marcela Aguero

Erk: This is important to us because this culture is our roots. Right now we just try to do it visually in our records, showing images of our cultural past as Mexicans. We have tried to do it by adding some Mexican musical elements into our songs, but we think we still haven't done it as well as we want it to release something like this on one of our CDs. We will probably do it soon.

IN: Are there any goals you feel you've accomplished?

Erk: We've accomplished everything we wanted to date. But there are still many goals to be accomplished. We never get enough.

IN: Is there anything you want to add?

Erk: Thanks for this interview. La Venganza de Montezuma will be in US soon. See you all of you who believe that Hocico can't play there!!

The re-release of Hocico's seminal LP *Signos de Aberracion* and the upcoming *Ladykiller* CDS will be available through Metropolis Records in 2003.

For more information about Hocico, visit their official website at:

www.hocico.net



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INDUSTRY

By Kyronfive

What Were We Thinking?

Industrialnation Crawls Down Memory Lane

Since the first issue of Industrialnation in 1991, IN has consistently strived to have its finger on the pulse of industrial music. Oftentimes IN has succeeded. And a few times IN has been dead wrong, too. Just how much has industrial music grown, changed, and evolved in the past 10+ years through the eyes of Industrialnation? Let's take a look at some famous Industrialnation quotes and find out

If you've ever seen one of the early issues of IN, or even own one (I know there are a few of you out there), the first few issues of the magazine were published in true 'zine format: xeroxed text on folded 8.5 x 11 sheets of paper. Yet, despite the admittedly low-tech format of the early issues, Industrialnation's critique of the nascent industrial scene-at-large was already well underway. In Issue #1, for example, we pronounced the 1000 Homo DJ's *Supernaut* indicative of "Alien Jourgensen's growing obsession with not sounding like he's using electronics." With the release of *Psalm 69* only a year later we definitely found out we were right. In Issue #2 we proclaimed that "TKK's latest album attempt seems to leave you a bit confused about what they are planning on doing with their music careers." That was written about *Sexplosion*, but it probably could have been written about any of TKK's albums in the last decade. Also in issue #2, Editor-in-Chief Paul attempted to broaden the average Industrialnation reader's musical horizons with his review of a Village People's concert. He wrote: "I expected a bunch of aging gay men to come out and do your usual reunion concert, but I was pleasantly surprised... If it was not for the Village People, where would we be today?" Don't answer that one, kids.

In Issue #3 we observed: "...while the scene is filled with techno-beat-boys showing off their samplers to one another, there are thankfully still plenty of innovators out there." I've caught myself saying the same thing in 2002. We also wrote: "Industrial shows are like sex - if you're exhausted, dripping in sweat, and maybe even bleeding afterwards it's been worthwhile." That sent me on a nostalgia trip for the mid-90s as I've found myself wondering on occasion if those nights at the karaoke bar where one guy hogs the mike singing 80s-soundalikes aren't a little more like the average industrial show in 2002

In issue #4 we had the misfortune of espousing *The Final Cut* as being "the next Pigface." Editor Paul freely admits he fell prey to Netwerk's marketing machine on that one, at that point untainted by what would be a long legacy of record labels touting records as having been 'produced/remixed/pissed on' by someone famous just because said-famous person was shooting up heroin in the studio next door. Yeah, well, before you call us suckers, be sure to hide all of your Cleopatra tribute comps under your bed.

In Issue #6, we reviewed a Snog disc by saying "if you like the sounds of Depeche Mode... this disc is a pure drug." Surely David Thrussell, if he had a grave, would be turning over in it right at this moment. We also touted Sister Machine Gun's *Sins of the Flesh* as being superior to Nine Inch Nails' *Pretty Hate Machine* because "SMG doesn't sing about the hardships of life like Trent so you can listen to this disc while depressed without fear." I think we got this one wrong because seem to recall Chris Randall singing about getting dumped by his girlfriend over and over on his record, too. And, incidentally, you thought nobody noticed that Village People concert review from Issue #2? Bill Lamebutt (I hope that isn't his real name) wrote a letter to the editor in Issue #6 that said "...thank you guys for the Village People review a few issues back. Industrial and disco - too bad *Sexplosion* was not a good example of either." I'd like to go back in time and be a fly on the wall the day he heard *13 Above the Night*.

Issue #7 was our first proper full-sized issue. Commemorating this occasion, one reader felt obliged to write the following letter to the editor: "You bastards. Please send me the items marked below... FNORD: Subversive Propaganda, your cutting edge 'zine, a large consignment of heavy drugs, a Kurtzweil K2000 (serial numbers optional), David Ogilvie commemorative colostomy bag. Failure to respond to this letter will result in the issuance of a Wackenhut Termination Voucher for your entire staff." That might explain the less-than-quarterly printing schedule we're on. Another reader offered more constructive criticism: "Might I offer a suggestion... MANDATORY EDITING... perhaps I'm merely experiencing grade school flashbacks, but frankly, there's no excuse for three different spellings of Rhys Fulber in one issue." Well it's not

our faults his parents named him something funny. And, beginning with Issue #7, grizzled old-timers will enjoy playing the 'take-a-shot-when-you-see-an-ad-from-a-record-label-that-doesn't-exist-anymore' drinking game. IN guarantees hours of entertainment.

In Issue #9 Kim Traub observed from the State of the Industry column (sound familiar?) "It's difficult to find any women in this genre." Traub listed Zia, Leslie Rakin, Ethyl Meatplow, and KMFD as the only bands with a female presence. Since then, a lot of has changed. Sure, go to an industrial show and guys will probably outnumber girls 10 to 1 onstage but a lot more bands have had a strong female presence since that column was written. Aiboforcen, Decoded Feedback, Epsilon Minus, Body Armour, SINA/Pzycho Bitch, Noxious Emotion, Lúxt, Android Lust, La Floa Maldita, Hanzel & Gretel, Flesh Field, and Hexedene are just a few of the many bands that have women in their ranks.

From his seminal Choking on Staples column (dearly missed by at least one reader) in Issue #10, Chase observed that goth/industrial clubs keep playing the same damn songs over and over no matter how much new crap is released. Some things never change, right? Although, get a load of this: Chase listed the following tracks as the top 10 industrial staples of 1994: "Ministry - Thieves, Front 242 - Headhunter, KMFD - Godlike, Nitfzer Ebb - Getting Closer, Gruesome Twosome - Hallucination Generation, Skinny Puppy - Dig It, Revolting Cocks - Beers, Steers, and Queers, Thrill Kill Kult - 'Cuz Its Hot, and Nine Inch Nails - Closer." Unless you are living in the Midwest, I think we can safely say clubs have moved on at least a little bit from this set list. Score one for industrial music. Goth clubs can play the same fucking 20-year-old Bauhaus song each week but industrial clubs do rotate their hit songs once every decade. Which means I have only 5 years left before I don't have to hear the same fucking VNV Nation song in the clubs anymore.

In Issue #11, in a review of Holy Gang's *Free Tyson Free*, yours truly remarked "Does anyone really want to hear Richard 23 rap?" I'll let you answer that one for yourselves, kids. And, on another note, wanna know why we never did an article on Yugoslavian band In Sotto Voce? Reade Write from Antler-Subway wrote the following letter to the editor that was printed in Issue #13: "At last check Boris Mikulic (In Sotto Voce) was seen on the front lines gunning down innocents and helping rebels to blow up schools and other-targeted public buildings. Rumor has it he was involved with some espionage and may have been captured by his enemies during a failed mission with the Borghes Na Daianan Resistance (they too used to record under the name Borghesia)." That explains why they never responded to our faxes.

In Issue #14, one reader was so appalled at reviewer Ned Kirby's negative review of Good Courage's *Old, Broken, and Destroyed* he was compelled to write: "Good Courage is the new Front 242 of Europe." Apparently the Holy Gang record wasn't cutting it for him, either. He finished his scathing assault on Ned by saying: "You should be ashamed of yourself, Kirby." I wonder what he thought of the last Stromkern record. Also, in Issue #14, we touted Front Line Assembly's *Plasticity* single as being "...the one to play if you're planning to go to a rave, bop around for awhile, and then gun down a few ecstasy-popping freaks." Er...okay. And, memo to Cleopatra, here's a tribute comp idea you haven't tried yet. From the Operation Beatbox compilation review: "please create a sequel to Operation Beatbox that is a collection of rap groups covering industrial songs... I'd love to hear Public Enemy cover any number of industrial classics."

Demo reviews and Industrialnation go hand-in-hand like chicken and butter, though most of the cassettes we reviewed weren't worth the Memorex they were printed on. There were, however, a few diamonds in the ruff. Scar Tissue, Gridlock, Assemblage 23, Kevorkian Death Cycle, and Flesh Field all had demos that were reviewed in Industrialnation and eventually went on to being released on actual record labels. We are proud and like to think their successes had a little bit to do with us. And we'd also like to think they'll repay us by throwing a couple of their unused groupies our way

Well, that's it for our little jaunt through memory lane. Tune in next issue when we try writing something coherent and meaningful

In 1993, Bostonians David Din and Matthew Crofoot joined forces to create the earliest Informatik recordings. It wasn't until 1995, however, that they released their first full length CD, *Direct Memory Access*, on their own label, Sinless Records. Featuring the caustic cuts "At Your Command," "I Confess," and "Autonomous," *Direct Memory Access* was such a success that Metropolis Records snatched up the release almost immediately, and re-issued it as *Direct Memory Access V2.0* featuring two new tracks and a bonus video. The track "Autonomous," in particular, was ahead of its time, mixing gritty industrial vocals with a chorus that sends today's Futurepop generation scrambling to the record bins for more.

In between *Direct Memory Access* and Informatik's sophomore effort, *Syntax*, both David and Matthew stayed busy. Matthew released his intelligent techno side project, LogiQ (co-written by Rob Galbraith of Component Records fame), while David focused on his solo project, Din_Fiv and embarked on a cross-country move from Boston to San Francisco. 1998 saw the release of Informatik's technological masterpiece *Syntax*. Featuring nine new tracks and remixes from artists such as NCC and Decoded Feedback, *Syntax* offered everything from the poppy opening track, "Things to Come" and the dirge, "Retrogradation" to the epic techno-meshed-up NCC remix of "Watching You Watching Me". *Syntax* firmly established Informatik as a staple on college radio and club DJ playlists.

In the wake of *Syntax*, Matthew Crofoot decided to go on hiatus from Informatik. His shoes were subsequently filled by Battery Cage frontman Tyler Newman, also Din_Fiv's live keyboardist and guitarist. Together, David and Tyler have released Informatik's most complete work to date, 2002's *Nymphomatik*, a cyber-sexual, industrial outpouring that fuses elements of rivet-head culture from days of old with today's Futurepop invasion. Offering a hardcore dancefloor assault track after track while still retaining the edge and high production quality Informatik is famous for, *Nymphomatik* is Informatik's most promising work to date.

By Cable



INFORMATIK

David Din was kind enough to cut his dinner short one evening, to discuss a little bit about his music and general interests.

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<http://www.industrialnation.com>



IN: Could you explain the current incarnation of Informatik? Specifically, what role do you play, what role does Tyler Newman play, and where is Matthew Crofoot?

David: Specifically, Matthew is just taking some time off of the project. He's actually moving to San Francisco in a month. We may start working together again then. Right now, Tyler and I write all of the music. It's much the same way as it was before [with Matt], we trade our ideas with one another and go from there.

IN: How would you describe your music to somebody who has never heard it before?

David: I think we're a dancefloor-oriented, electro/industrial meets Futurepop project. I guess you would say hard, but fun, industrial.

IN: I personally noticed a more dancefloor-orientated vibe about your latest release. Which is not to say that you couldn't dance to most of your other songs. It's just that *Nymphomatik*, while remaining original, seems to incorporate a lot of elements that have been popping up in industrial lately. Elements, I think, that come from the return of Synthpop and the assimilation of trance in industrial music...

David: Definitely a heavy trance influence.

IN: I feel that most of *Nymphomatik* is geared specifically for the dancefloor.

David: Absolutely. That was our intent from the get-go. We wanted to make it a very dancefloor-oriented album. Basically, any track could be fun on the dance floor depending on the people's taste and what the DJ's want to do with it.

IN: *Nymphomatik* is also blatantly sexual. Was this theme also intentional from its inception, or is it something that evolved during the writing process?

David: We knew from the start that this is what we wanted to do with it. Even within the confines of a theme, I think that it covers a lot of territory. Every song is different in its own way. I liked the challenge of trying to stay within a theme, but explore different aspects of that theme in each song.

IN: Is this your first thematic CD or was the theme of your other releases just too subtle for me to pick up on?

David: I would have to say that this one was the first one on a conscious level.

IN: All of your releases offer at least a couple of

remixes at the end of them. Do you have any plans to jump on the bandwagon and release an all remix CD?

David: Well, right now we're working on *Revision*, a follow up to our first three CDs. What that is going to be is remixes from all of our albums. Some new tracks with some big name remixes as well.

IN: Can you tell us any of those big names right now?

David: Assemblage 23 and the Funker Vogt remixes are already completed. There will be more names added as they happen. I can't say too much more about that. You can never count on a remix until it's done. It should be out in April.

IN: Have you ever remixed anybody else's work?

David: I am not working on anything at the moment, but I have done quite a lot of remixes. If you go to our website, there is a list of remixes. Look for the "Corrosive Audio" link. I've done remixes for Decoded Feedback, Negative Format, Flesh Field...

IN: The last time that I saw you was when you were touring as Din_Fiv with Haujobb and Velvet Acid Christ. I recollect everybody on the tour being sick as dogs. Other than that, how did the tour go for

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you?

Dasid: It was awesome. It was my first U.S. tour. It was a great challenge and an experience. I think that it has definitely helped me musically. I have never really played in front of an audience before. Not only was it the first tour, but it was the first shows that I've ever played. I think that the experience definitely paid off. Many of the ideas that I had for this album were expanded musically because of it [touring].

IN: How does playing live expand your thoughts musically?

Dasid: It was our approach. We had a very improv approach- even though there's only so much that you can do [with electronic music]. We mixed our songs up every night. We had different orders that we played every night. We just played differently every night. Yes, there's the backing tracks that you can't do much about, but we did things differently every night. I would sing parts differently, sometimes I would change the words around. I was very much in the moment, and not just about doing this canned performance type of thing. It wasn't like industrial karaoke. It had a very "live" aspect to it. We wanted it to be very different for us. We knew that if we did 18 shows in a row that were all identical, we'd be very bored. It was getting used to "forming" songs as apposed to "writing" songs that came off when we went back into the studio. We tried to let things flow without trying to think about them too much.

IN: I understand that you also recently did a couple of dates as Informatik at the end of the last VNV Nation/Haujobb tour. Did that go over well for everybody?

Dasid: Those were just sort of warm-ups for our tour that we are planning this spring, coinciding with the remix album. We thought that it would be important to give some of the songs a test run. So we did it, then went back into the studio and retooled a few things. That's also what we did with Din_Fiv. Played one show, then decided what worked and what didn't. It's good to do a dry run before doing something serious. I believe in preparing as much as possible.

IN: So we can definitely expect to see more of Informatik live in the future?

Dasid: Oh, yes.

IN: What is your most memorable tale from touring?

Dasid: It's all sort of a blur. I'd have to think about that. It was such a great experience. I enjoyed

everybody — the band members and crew. Everybody on the tour equally felt that it was a quality show. Each band added a lot and put on a great show. Even though most of the people were there for Velvet Acid Christ or Haujobb, they got their money's worth all around. There were some problems, but everybody gave it all that they had.

IN: What's in your CD player right now?

Dasid: Nothing. I'm in the process of moving, so I can't remember the last thing that I listened to. I generally listen to unreleased stuff that people send me - demos and stuff. Actually, today I listened to an unreleased AEC (American Electronics Corporation) track. It's one of Tyler's many side-projects. It's an amazing track.

IN: What are some of your other musical and non-musical influences in your own work? Film, television, other media.



Dasid: I dunno. It's hard to say. I think that out of all the acts in the genre, Assemblage 23 is one of the strongest acts around. Funker Vogt definitely comes in there a close second. As far as influences- it's hard to say. I really like the Simpsons a lot-

IN: [laughs]

Dasid: Yeah, pretty much any cartoon is good, in my opinion.

IN: I was rather disappointed when they took The Family Guy, off the air, myself.

Dasid: I was just about to say The Family Guy! It's an unbelievable show! Simpsons and The Family Guy, top of my list.

IN: What are your feelings about the current state of electronic music?

Dasid: Mmmm, I don't care. I don't listen to a lot of electronic music. Aside from what I make and what people send me to work on, I don't listen to a lot. I enjoy it, but I don't sit there and listen to it all day just for fun. I watch the Simpsons for fun [laughs].

IN: What else do you like to do in your spare time?

Dasid: I love to work on music. That and cooking.

IN: What do you like to cook?

Dasid: Well, I'm a vegan, so I'm trying to broaden my pallet and my abilities and make interesting vegan food that's interesting to non-vegans as well. Take traditional dishes and try to put them into a "vegan" context.

IN: Your website bio says that you're a vegan who is also interested in politics. Other artists with strong beliefs, such as Morrissey and Moby, have made it a deliberate point to share their social and political views in their lyrics and CD liner notes. Do you feel as though this is something that has a place, or will ever have a place, in your music?

Dasid: Yes, but only in Din_Fiv. Because I can't speak for my other bandmates, I can only speak for myself. I have a concept album that I've been working with over the last two plus years for the next Din_Fiv album. That could be a very political concept album. I don't feel like I should talk about it at the moment, because doing is more important than talking. I'll just leave that at that.

IN: Any last words?

Dasid: Our new CD won't be the same old stuff. It's going to be quite radically different. Not only will there be remixes from all three albums with some big name remixers, you'll also have some rare tracks and many brand new tracks as well. It's going to be a very well-rounded package.

IN: Well then, thank-you for your time.

Dasid: Thank you.

For more information on Informatik, check out their official site at:

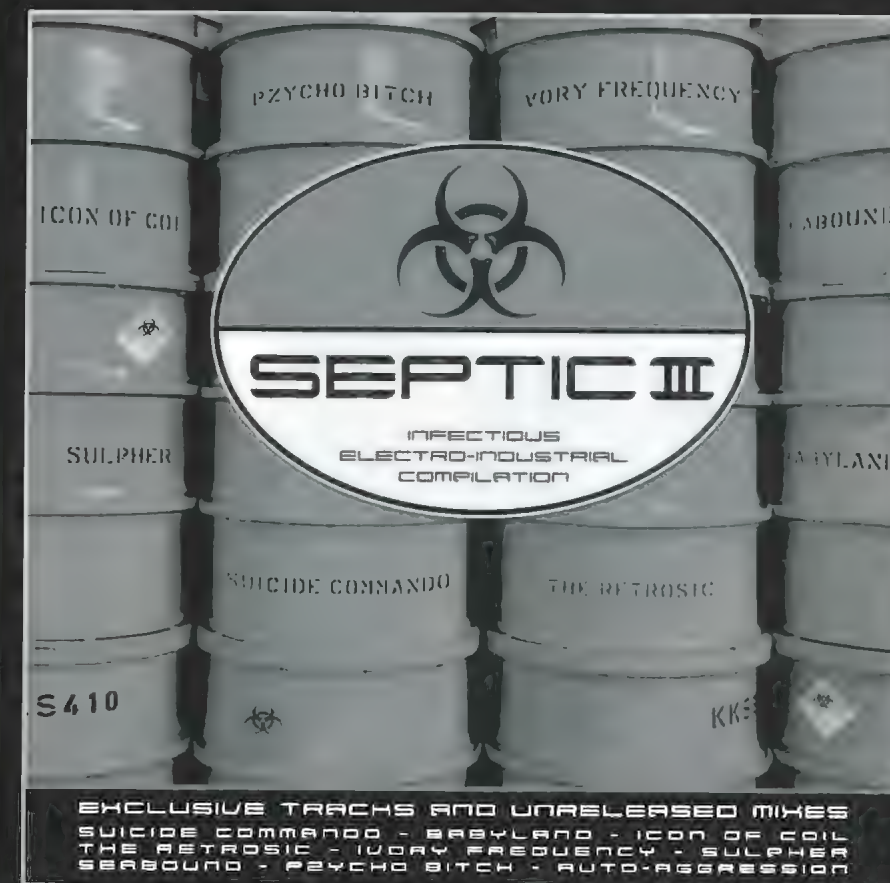
www.nymphomatik.com

Information on Dasid's solo project, Din_Fiv can be found at:

www.sinless.com/din_fiv

<http://www.industrialnation.com>

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Both the SEPTIC compilations so far have been able to please me, but rarely before was a compilation tracklist this varied and homogeneous at the same time.
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(Stefan Brunner – Orkus Magazine)

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Suicide Commando • The Retrosic
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point is to create imagery in the listener's head. Let him create his own scenario with action, love, calm, confusion, etc. Multiple interpretations make music live longer, have the listener question himself and his musical sensations.

IN: Male or Female, the name, represents gender ambiguity. Likewise, Male or Female, the band, seems to be interested in genre ambiguity, or at least the blurring of lines between different forms of electronic music. Was that intentional?

Codenys: Yes, this music has a gender ambiguity, but Male or Female is not Male and Female; it leaves a choice, undetermined. Keeping it close to a new born feeling, to childhood where the innocence is raw; where there is no need to define a gender. Like music is.

IN: I noticed you released a 12" on the Atomic Reactor label. How did that come about?

Codenys: It is a one shot track dropped one time on Atomic Reactor... we were still working on trying to develop the whole band's concept.

IN: Years ago (around 1996, I estimate) there was a rumor that 99 Kowalski (vocalist on *Off*) would contribute vocals to Male or Female. Is this true?

Codenys: No, but I believe Kristin (99 Kowalski) has a lot of talent as a singer...I lost track of her.

IN: In what way is Male or Female an exploration of the senses?

Codenys: You might say so, if you're happy it will make you see flowers; but if you're angry it will make you bite.

If you are rational, you will be interested by the technical performance.

IN: I noticed some Male or Female material was played live when Front 242 played at Eurorock. Are there any plans to tour solely as Male or Female?

Codenys: We developed a DVD release and live images to prepare a "live" presentation of Male or Female. One of the ideas would be to create a virtual singer on screen surrounded by a band. We need some time before we can speak of touring but we plan on doing so.

IN: Out of all the Male or Female material, what is your favorite track and why?

Codenys: Lucent Skin / Kamikaze; because it is beautiful and clumsy.

IN: You three have a unique vantage point of electronic music having been influential in its development. How do you see the changing interests and values of electronic music in the past decade? How is Male or Female a reflection of that?

Codenys: I'm a very disappointed actor of the electronic music evolution. To make it short, it has been taken over by English bands and most of them make everything sound like rock because it is in their blood; or in the U.S. they brought the industrial genre from electro back to guitar rock. The other big mistake is recycling old tracks with new electro features... bad deal! I believe we still need to develop an electronic music discipline and look for new aesthetics and new forms that are proper, specific to the technology. You do not program machines like you play guitars, violin, or any other instruments.

Nevertheless, there are a few very creative forms of music out there and I believe some people will take time to "think" of new concepts. We need to push the limits of music; never be satisfied. Male or Female is a lab; we try.

IN: How does Male or Female go about pushing the limits of music? Of technology?

Codenys: You know, we are still at the primitive age of electronic music. Most musicians "play" with a computer and are happy with quick results; they do not question themselves about the meaning of what they did. Also, the record industry doesn't help; it allows no time for discovery and research. For them, money is music's key factor. I believe we still need to develop an electronic music; to "think" new concepts. How to push the limits? Stop recycling old stuff; explore new sounds and structures; forget factory sounds and classic rock structures.. innovate. Technology has not been exploited properly. Take a synth from the 80s and you'll see those machines have much more to say than what human produced with it.

IN: What lies ahead for Male or Female?

Codenys: The two new CDs that are ready, a DVD as I said a "live" production; will that be sufficient?

You bet it is.

Access more information on Male or Female from the official website:
www.maleorfemale.be

RAN SAM DOM PLES

by Todd Zachritz

Welcome back, faithful IN readers! It's been a long...what, many years? Anyway, I feel a need to explain a couple of things before we proceed. If you are reading this magazine, no doubt you are already a pretty die-hard fan of 'eendoostrial' music. You know the VNVs, Ohgrs, Apoptygmas, 'Jobbs, KMFDMA, Pigfaces, and TKKs-probably inside out and back again. 'Random Samples' is here to present some stuff you may NOT have heard of, stuff that falls under the radar. Left-of-center, obscure, experimental, and generally unclassifiable sounds that may well not be easily found in record stores. That said, out of hundreds of releases I've reviewed on my website (GODSEND ONLINE, found at <http://www.members.evansville.net/tgodsend/>), these are some of the cream of the crop in my eyes (or is it ears?)...

First up, It's Windsor For The Derby's new CD, The Emotional Rescue LP.

Fresh from a remixed mini-LP and some other notable collaborations, WFTD move into some new directions with this release, further gravitating from the abstracted guitarscapes of their early work and into more accessible and moody singer-songwriter territory. WINDSOR's poignant and gentle atmospherics are wholly intact, but with more of a focus on the concept of song. Dan Matz's soft and melodic vocals are growing in both confidence and presence, while the band's elegantly interweaving guitars are accented by drums and electronic drones. The track "Awkwardness" even has a sort of new wave/indie spunkiness that's, well, sort of awkward. Perhaps an attempt to deflate critics who may accuse WFTD of being dour or 'slowcore'? Nonetheless, this is a genuinely superb release. (Aesthetics)

<http://www.aesthetics-usa.com>

Up next, we have a familiar name-DJ Spooky, with his *Optometry* CD. Paul Miller (aka DJ Spooky) has been a distinctively intelligent and diverse musical voice for some time, but this seems to be his first major release with a predominantly jazz-oriented flavor, and he has certainly found a capable group of collaborators to say the least! Matthew Shipp, William Parker, Joe McPhee, and Guillermo E. Brown are among modern avant-jazz's finest names, and with DJ Spooky in tow, they collectively create a hybrid melding of free jazz and forward-thinking electronica/dub-hop/beat poetry. "Asphalt (tome 3)" seems to be the most accessible track, featuring spoken words from Carl Hancock Rux and musical input from Pauline Oliveros. Later tracks scurry into the nether regions of intergalactic film music, psychedelic ambient dub, and SUN RA-tinged space jazz. Surely a most curious and refreshing collection of downtempo, downtown music to inspire and enlighten. (Thirsty Ear)

<http://www.thirstyear.com/>

Some of you lucky folks will know this group as, at the time of this writing, they are scheduled to open the next LEGENDARY PINK DOTS tour. ORIGAMI ARKTIKA's recent CD is called *Fantomlust*, and it's a live recording of this mysterious and unique Norwegian collective, recorded in St. John Church in Gdansk, Poland in late 2000. Using only acoustic sound sources, *Fantomlust* is a fascinating, superb, and unclassifiable collection of music that bridges the gap between dark folk,

musique concrete styles). It's a powerful and dynamic recording, from somber, introspective passages to ear-jarring (and cat frightening) noises, all captured with exceptional clarity. An engrossing and fascinatingly different work more than worthy of investigation. (Ignis)

<http://terra.pl/ignis/>

One of my favorite releases in some time comes from Australia's SEAWORTHY, whose debut CD, *It's Humbling When Two Saints Meet*, is a gorgeous set of poignant and introspective instrumentals that wax and wane, caressing the psyche with a warm and subtle touch. SEAWORTHY's Cameron Webb and Greg Bird have created a beautiful album of gently haunting melodies and understated yet heartfelt paeans to, well, perhaps the less-than-exalted times in life. Similarities can be mentioned to stuff like classic ENO perhaps, or some of the drone merchants of the Kranky stable, though SEAWORTHY can ably stand on their own collective feet with this remarkable work. I fell in love with this disc immediately and if the aforementioned float your boat (there's a pun in there somewhere), I'd suggest giving a shout to Cameron and Greg as this is simply a magnificent collection of what I like to call 'pure' music. (Steady Cam Records)

<http://www.steadycamrecords.com.au/>

The Nashville-based ambient/space/world music collective SPACECRAFT never fails to impress with their fleetingly elegant and imaginatively filmic soundscapes. Their latest release, *Inside The Inside*, was recorded live in the St. Mary's Cathedral in Philadelphia, and listeners would be surprised to note that this is improvisational work-a testament to the skills and intuition that Tony Gerber, Giles Reaves, John Rose, and Diane Timmons have developed in their years of collaboration. SPACECRAFT's impeccably-produced blend of electronics, processing, dulcimers, and atmospheric vocals provide a sort of sonic voyage, a travelogue of natural settings and often mysterious, faraway landscapes. Clips of melody-assemble themselves, as subtle as dewdrops, while amorphous electronic sound fields conjure visual imagery of a majestic flight above the treetops. SPACECRAFT, indeed. Some may consider this to be 'new age,' but that's selling the scope of this group short. A beautifully engaging release. (Spaceformusic.com)

<http://www.spaceformusic.com>

On a similar note, we have BRANNAN LANE's

Hypnotic Drift CD. Now, Brannan is a prolific composer and has collaborated with the likes of VIDNA OBMANA, the SPACECRAFT folks, and many others, including some TV soundwork. Solo, he creates impeccably well-produced ambient earthscapes that easily rival bigger names like ROBERT RICH or STEVE ROACH. *Hypnotic Drift* effectively provides the soundtrack to a lovely, laid-back night at home dreaming of a cool night under the stars. Drifting, shifting, evolving ambience that functions well whether it's background sound or as a relaxing focus. Superb and perfectly gorgeous work that more than ably fulfills the title's premise. (Brannan Lane Music)

<http://www.brannanlanemusic.com>

Moving on from the ambient earth-sounds, it's PAN AMERICAN's latest, *The River Made No Sound*. Subtle and mysterious soundwork from LABRADFORD member Mark Nelson, *The River Made No Sound* is a fascinating juxtaposition of icy electronic programming and semi-melodic drones. "For A Running Dog" is 8-minutes of minimal techno throb with a cool and melodic undercurrent, a sort of expansion on the prototype Chain Reaction minimal/dub sound. Nelson proves his mastery of texture with tracks like "Settled," which combines a gentle ambient warmth with glitchified field recordings and the sounds of industry-a description which doesn't quite do the piece justice as it's most definitely not 'industrial' in the accepted sense of that term. "Place Names" begins with a softly sensitive little melody and eventually blooms into a hypnotic and rhythmic piece, all the while retaining its overt fragility. "Red Line" is a quiet and entrancing dub track that seduces with a chilly air of tension, while "Raised Wall" is an alien mix of cutups and extreme frequencies. PAN AMERICAN refuses to fit itself comfortably into any setting, be it 'post-rock,' 'clicks & cuts' dub, or 'minimal techno.' And although *The River Made No Sound* utilizes aspects of all of these, it bravely stands on its own and charts its own unique and ultimately satisfying course. (Kranky)

<http://brainwashed.com/kranky/>

Finally, we dive into the deep, darkened waters of HORCHATA / OCOSI's collaborative effort entitled, well, its apparently self-titled, so *Horchata / Ocosi* it is. This intercontinental collaboration between likeminded ambient/dub/hop artists refuses to fit into any singular category. It's a dark, ominous journey, with edgy reverberations and deep, cavernous bass rumblings. "Quinta" is a stark and minimalist piece that reminds of a blackened variation on the Basic Channel vibe, whereas the following track, "Something For Nothing," is a midtempo groove monster that joins a slow, breakbeat with obscure effects, genesplicing the creepiness of COIL with the cold, repetitive breaks of SCORN. Fans of TECHNO-ANIMAL's collaboration with PORTER RICKS should most definitely pick up this uniformly excellent release of forward-thinking electronic music from the dark side. (Zero1 Media)

<http://www.zero1media.com/>

And there you have it, some great and obscure releases that I hope I've encouraged you to check into. Support independent music and the artists who do it all for the love of the music and not the dollar\$. Deutschmarks, Euros, or chart positions. And if you somehow miraculously enjoyed reading the above, check out GODSEND ONLINE for tons of reviews of other obscure and independent sounds, not to mention interviews and unmentionable goodies. Until next time, thanx for checking this out and cheers!

Floating Fish Studios

Any Questions? are proud to release the 10th Anniversary Special Edition CD of their 1992 classic, *Prey For Death*. This newly remastered release features bonus tracks, limited edition DigiPak packaging, and artwork by Eyes of Chaos creator, Mike Bohatch.

"Images of an industrial wasteland filled with corpses, mutilations, cybernetically engineered freaks, and chemical overdose come to mind." - In Rhythmus Bleiben

All products are available at Amazon.com, CDbaby.com, and distributed by Makepeace Records

OBOMATIO - Holy Uncommunion | PUNCH DRUNK - Upward The Past, Downward The Future | IMBUE VAGARY - elektronique

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With a name that represents a brotherhood between its three members, and with a sound that has literally ushered in a new era of elektro-industrial dance music, Covenant have forged a union of sound, ideology, and emotion that has become the calling card of the Futurepop generation.

Since its inception in the early 90s, Covenant has been a tour de force of kinetic energy. Covenant's three members, Eskil Simonsson, Joakim Montelius, and Clas Nachmanson, met while still in school and began several years of musical tinkering, the results of which established Covenant's unusual writing process. Notably, Simonsson, the band's principal songwriter and vocalist, writes the music which Nachmanson and Montelius perform live, while Montelius writes the lyrics which Simonsson sings.

By 1994, the triad had signed to Memento Materia in their homebase of Sweden and released *Dreams of a Cryotank*, later licensed by Off Beat in Europe and 21st Circuitry Record domestically. A conceptual dance album, *Dreams of a Cryotank* bore both an instant dancefloor classic ("Theremin") and a 20 minute sonic experiment ("Cryotank Expansion"), an indication of things to come. Covenant's 1996 follow-up, *Sequencer*, cemented their reputation for riveting dance tracks and thought-provoking lyrics and firmly established



COVENANT

Interview by Sharon Maher

Photographs by Kasskara

them in the US industrial dancefloor cannon with hits such as "Stalker" and "Figurehead." Several festival appearances and tours ensued. 1998's *Europa* and 2000's *United States of Mind*, with dance hits "I Am" and "Dead Stars" respectively, have only furthered Covenant's appeal. To date, it's nearly impossible to get out of a US goth/industrial club without hearing a Covenant track.

2002 has been an exciting year for Covenant. After leaving Dependent Records (fronted by ex-Off Beat honcho Stefan Herwig) and signing to KA2 Records, a subsidiary of Sony in Europe, Covenant began work on its follow up to *United States of Mind*, entitled *Northern Light*. Covenant's first full length album for a major label, *Northern Light* promises to live up to the expectations of its growing fanbase. The first single, "Call the Ships to Port" was released in late August and went straight to #1 on the German Alternative Charts (and stayed, there for 8 weeks). A second single, "Bullet" will follow the release of the LP.

Part I of this interview occurred with Joakim Montelius while Covenant was still in the studio recording *Northern Light*. There, Montelius discussed the recording process, the future of Covenant, and single-handedly coined a new genre.

Welcome to Lego Pop.



In a way we are the music we make. It's our life, emotions, and dreams filtered through synthesizers and distilled by computers



IN: So, you are presently in the studio recording your new album *Northern Light*. What does the music sound like?

Montellius: It sounds strange [laughs].

IN: Well it always sounds strange.

Montellius: It sounds even more strange than usual but in an exciting and good way.

IN: How are you dealing with the pressures of being on a major label?

Montellius: We don't.

IN: I don't blame you!

Montellius: The label gave us complete freedom to do whatever we wanted. They have a lot of faith in us and in our producer. It would make no sense for them to try to direct our creativity anyway, that would never work. We only do the best we ever can and hope that it's enough for ourselves as well as for the label and in the end, for the fans.

IN: You've always seemed to take each new album to a new level. What level you are going to take your listeners to on *Northern Light*? What is your mindset on this album?

Montellius: That's the unusual thing about this album, I think, because we don't really have any clear focus on this one. We just wrote a lot of good songs that we tried to make them sound something like we want them to. It's not very complicated, but it's new and unfamiliar. We worked in the opposite order than on our previous albums, focusing on melody and atmosphere rather than beats and loops and it's just interesting to see what happens. Of course, it's kind of weird to work with a producer. We've never done that before.

IN: I was going to ask about that. How is it working with a producer for the very first time?

Montellius: It's strange. Jacob is sitting over there in the main chair behind the mixing desk and that's the position we usually have ourselves. So we sometimes feel like saying "Can I please... uh..."

IN: "Can I sit in my chair please?"

Montellius: Yes. But it's interesting. It's almost like having a normal work. We have a schedule. We work only 12 hours a day. So we are up at 10:00 in the morning and work until 10:00 in the evening, normally, which is totally weird for us because we normally go into the studio at 6:00 in the evening and work until morning. It takes a while to get used to but in a way it's really good because it's more organized and things are taking place in a more structured manner.

IN: And how is the producer? Is he interjecting a lot of his ideas or is he just sort of working with you?

Montellius: It's quite laid-back, actually. We had all the songs written when we came here, so now we just put it all together, polishing the lyrics, arranging and recording the vocals. One step at a time. Slowly sculpting the songs out of the rough demos. Jacob is one of the few producers at his level who doesn't impose his personality on the music. He aims to refine and cultivate the qualities of the band. He's got something on his mind and when he tells us about it we just try to do it. If we like it we just go ahead and do it and if we don't we just try to do it better.

IN: So you're just trying to do it better?

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brotherhood that the name Covenant represents.

Montellius: That idea came from an actual situation in the beginning, because the three of us connected very fast, even before we started Covenant. Clas, Eskil and me were always the ones who stuck together and came up with new ideas. That relationship has been growing deeper and deeper through every year, through every album, and through every tour. Especially touring. I think the first two tours in America were only Eskil and me, so I guess we bonded even more than we would have if Clas had been there too. Of course we would grow very close. That's the kind of experience that either split a band or weld it closer together.

IN: Those first two tours were the two of you in a van with nowhere to hide from each other.

Montellius: Nowhere to hide, exactly. Almost sitting on top of each other because of all the merchandise [the label put on us]. That was a great tour. It was quite intense, but fun. I wouldn't do it again, though.

IN: Touring the United States in a nightliner tour bust must be night and day from touring in a van.

Montellius: Yeah, definitely. Even when we made the first American tour we had already made a nightliner tour in Europe. Actually the first real tour we made was in a nightliner.

IN: That was the Cybervision tour [Covenant's European tour in 1996 with Haujobb and Steril -ed], right?

Montellius: Yeah. The American tour was the tour we should have done before but never did [both laugh].

IN: You had to go back and earn it.

Montellius: Yeah, we did it backwards.

IN: You had to re-earn the nightliner.

Montellius: And I think we did, didn't we?

IN: I find it really interesting that you write the lyrics and Eskil sings them. And you don't want to sing them because you don't like to be the center of attention, or so you say.

Montellius: Well, there are actually two reasons. My singing voice is horrible. And even if it was good I would never want to do it anyway. I don't think I'd be able to handle that kind of attention.

IN: But, on the flip side, Eskil can apparently handle the attention. He's very charismatic onstage and people clearly connect with him because he's so passionate and he really puts himself out for people, but off stage he's very reclusive. I always found it very interesting that you don't sing because you don't want to be the center of attention but then off-stage you are fairly gregarious and talkative while Eskil is usually quite reclusive. How did that happen?

Montellius: I don't know, actually. You have to kind of like to be admired to be in the center of attention - to be able to do that Eskil happens to like that. I don't. On the other hand, I like to sit around and talk to people in a more relaxed and personal way. I think Eskil is normally quite social but after the gig he's probably just exhausted. He has to ask him about that.

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Montellius: Yes, we tried them out in the store, too. The three of us were standing there with five different kinds of black dresses in the ladies department very seriously discussing "oh, well that doesn't fit you that good. People thought we were totally crazy."

IN: I hope none of you turned to one another and asked, "does this dress make my butt look big?"

Montellius: No, even though they actually did [laughs]. We started wearing the suits off-stage on the CyberVision tour. Then we decided, "well, let's keep [the suits]. Nobody else has suits anyway."

IN: One thing I know you guys have always been a champion of is "internationalism" - on a world without boundaries. I know the name Covenant represented a brotherhood between the three of you. Did the name Covenant ever represent an international brotherhood?

Montellius: Not intentionally. When we got the name we had no idea that we would have the ability to have an international connection to anything. Now that you say it, though, it could be.

IN: While re-listening to *Dreams of a Cryotank* this week I was struck by the abundance of sampling you did from *Blade Runner* and 2001. I know you once said that the *Blade Runner* samples on *Dreams of a Cryotank* embodied your struggles with God. What do the 2001 samples represent?

Montellius: 2001 is very much the same. I think both movies are about the same thing, only different affects of it. Of course I cheated and read the book, but my impression of 2001 is that when Dave goes through the monolith he becomes one with the divine, or at least something much greater than mankind. He becomes part of the force that put the monolith there in the beginning, which could be God, or something else. All good science fiction - all good literature even - is about the struggle to find out where you come from and why you are there. Why things happen the way they happen. I think these movies tried to do that in a sci-fi environment, which was fitting with the kind of music we did at the time. To me, they have a philosophical and ideological similarity.

IN: In the early days it seemed like you had a goal to present a complete image with a song. Now I think you're writing plainer lyrics with more direct meaning. *United States of Mind* seemed very personal for you - or the stuff you wrote, at least. Where are you now with lyrics on *Northern Light*?

Montellius: Somewhere in-between, I think... or very much from song to song, it becomes much harder over the years to write lyrics. It's very difficult to keep trying to say something meaningful when you have already said so many things. After awhile you start repeating yourself. Or, I guess, I do.

IN: Perhaps you said it so well once that it was hard necessary to say it again?

Montellius: Yes, exactly.

IN: I read that 'Figurehead' were your favorite.

Montellius: Well, one of them, yes.

IN: What's another one?

Montellius: "Babel." I think those two represent the way I felt when they were released.

IN: And how is the producer? Is he interjecting a lot of his ideas or is he just sort of working with you?

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theme. I think a lot of it has a very homogenic feel and attitude to it. It's much more cohesive than the other albums.

IN: But you walked into *Sequencer* with a very distinct idea, didn't you?

Montellius: *Sequencer* sounds like *Dreams of a Cryotank* was meant to sound. We were already trying to find that link between dance music and the EDM sound on *Dreams of a Cryotank* but we were just too inexperienced in the studio to make that happen.

IN: So it makes sense, then, that *Europa* sounded quite different than *Sequencer*. You had taken the *Dreams of a Cryotank/Sequencer* sound as far as you wanted to go with it. You had done exactly what you wanted so now it was time to tear it down and start afresh with a whole different sound and feeling. Am I right?

Montellius: Yes, exactly. That's the only way to do it. It would be horribly boring to try to do the same thing over and over again.

IN: That said, I thought *United States of Mind* was a natural progression from *Europa*. I thought it had more in common with *Europa* than with the earlier records.

Montellius: Yes, *United States of Mind* became exactly what *Europa* was meant to be. It seems we're always one album behind [laughs].

IN: So what are you doing now on *Northern Light*?

Montellius: What *United States of Mind* was supposed to be! No, this album will be very different. There are basic things that we have changed. We get closer and closer to a more laid-back structure of sound. It's not so much in your face anymore, which is good and bad at the same time. It's easier to make interesting music when you don't have to be so damn loud and entertaining all the time, but at the same time we have new and unfamiliar parameters to manipulate. We don't want to lose the edge and intensity just because we think the tempo down. We're trying to make an album that is enjoyable, but also deep and emotional without having to blow your speakers to pieces.

IN: So you are working on a more subtle level.

Montellius: Yeah, we are trying to. Jacob, the producer, is very good at guiding us in the way we want to go. He's got the sensitivity and skill necessary to make it work.

IN: It has been hard to write music with Eskil now living in Sweden, right?

Montellius: I noticed that when we came here [to the recording studio in Sweden] with the songs that we had written in Sweden, that I didn't go to Berlin for a few weeks. All the time I made by myself in Berlin I have to have all of these extra discussions that would have already been done if we had cooperated more. But, then again, he had so many good ideas and so much good input in Berlin. He's definitely more experienced now than before he went. It was a very good thing that he went to Berlin. His experiences and perspectives are always good. It's only if they are difficult to handle, because you have to try harder and question your way of thinking.

IN: What are your touring plans this year?

Montellius: I think the usual one. We will tour Europe and then America. We may do the VNY Nation thing and do the whole tour at once. We will aim to make less travel, probably a lot more than you do in Europe.

IN: What was the last of your touring plans?

Montellius: It was too much stress and strain, too much responsibility, too little privacy. This time around it was more than I could handle, but after about two weeks in that nightmare-like environment I always get very stressed so it's better to speed it up.

IN: I think the problem with America is that it is so big and there are so many places you can't go because you can't get the tour support so you end up doing a lot of traveling, probably a lot more than you do in Europe.

Montellius: Oh yes. That's right. Even though we love touring and thoroughly enjoy that special kind of connection there, it between band and audience, the logistics of it all are sometimes too hard to handle. But it's mainly a matter of better planning. So we'll work out a more clever way of criss-crossing your continent.

IN: That said, though, I think, from the beginning,

IN: Going back to my written questions here for a second, I get the sense that *Dreams of a Cryotank* and *Sequencer* were more angst-ridden than *Europa* and *United States of Mind* is that because of self-maturation or did you just get all of that stuff out of your system in the early days?

Montellius: I think it's about different kinds of anxiety in life. *Dreams of a Cryotank* is more filled with the Cold War-type of anxiety. It is about the big issues.

IN: And *Sequencer*?

Montellius: *Sequencer* is more personal, I guess. It was written during a rough time for Eskil and I was not that happy, either. So it was a transition period. We were just getting started trying to be grown-up people. We were trying to cope with all kinds of problems: girlfriends, parents, and more personal things. I think, on *Dreams of a Cryotank*, many of the themes on that album are older stuff that we wrote when we were younger. We just re-used it for the album. I guess it is like the whole renegead period of troubles that we dealt with on those two albums.

IN: So, by the time you got to *Europa*, things were a little more direct and refined?

Montellius: Yes, but I still think it is quite dark in terms of lyrical themes, at least.

IN: Certainly on 'Go Film,' 'Riot,' and 'Tension.'

Montellius: That album feels more like *Covenant* from default. I did things the way I've done it before only I just tried to make the same thing better. That's probably also why the lyrical themes on *United States of Mind* are so confused [laughs]. They seem kind of strange to me because these are things I would never normally write about. On *United States of Mind* I tried to change the lyrical themes because I was sick of doing the same thing over and over again. I really wanted progress in a forced kind of way. Like a cultural revolution of my own. Sort of turning the old in favor of something new and interesting. Now I realize that it's better to use the past as a stepping stone on the journey towards the future. What really matters is what's going on right here, right now. But that's also the most difficult thing to capture. From these insights I found a new language that I'm still trying to master.

IN: 'Still Life' seems so personal. It was an album moment on that album.

Montellius: Yeah, it was fantastic to make that song, actually. I wrote it when Jenny (my girlfriend) was away to work in Wales for 8 months. It was very lonely and I had a lot of time to myself to question myself and the world around me in my life. So I sat at home alone on a Friday night and my neighbors had a party. I had the heart of distant music someone celebrates, which just triggered the whole song. In art a still life is an exercise in seeing. You use familiar objects, like apples, flowers and a bottle, and try to present them as you really see them, not as they appear at first glance. Mondrian, for example, made some fantastic modernist still lifes that challenge all our concepts about vision. This is what I tried to do with my own life with that song. So the title is a word game: still life as in the exercise of still life. It was a hard task for me to make that song. It though and especially to sing it, because I don't have no more so it was very difficult to do it. But the result is a unique and very personal song.

IN: I hear you've decided to move out of the closet and just admit that Covenant writes pop music.

Montellius: Well, no, actually I think it is quite obvious all the way from *Dreams of a Cryotank* that the basic structure and the basic idea of the music [we make] is quite based in pop music. There is nothing wrong with that. It's one of the kinds of music we like ourselves. And I know that I used the term "pop music with an edge" to describe *Dreams of a Cryotank* in an interview at the time, so we have never denied our pop connection.

IN: I think Covenant is a left-of-center take on pop music. It is pop music with an interest in noise and experimentation.

Montellius: Yes, but on *United States of Mind* and much more on the new album *Northern Light*, we are switching the noisy experiment thing to experiments with weird combinations of musical styles.

IN: That said, though, I think, from the beginning,

you've always been interested in combining different styles of electronic music - hip hop, drum & bass, etc - these styles have all come out at different times.

Joakin: Yeah, and that's the whole point of making sample based electronic music. It's just a quality and just a way of making music that actually leaves the opportunity to experiment with all of these things. You don't have to be able to play the instruments. You don't have to be able to perform the kind of music you use. It's like a Lego. That's what we do, we make Lego music!

IN: Lego Pop?

Montellius: Yes!

IN: Screw Futurepop, everyone, because Covenant is onto Lego Pop.

Montellius: [Laughs] Yes, it's more fun.

IN: I never understood the ideology of having strict boundaries between different styles of electronic music. One thing I always appreciated about Covenant was the fact that you wanted to try all styles of electronic music and never felt restricted by that.

Montellius: No, that's not a part of us, really. Maybe because of our background. We were never part of any sort of scene because there was no scene at that time, for the type of music we were doing. We just made the music we liked ourselves. There was no crowd around us, you can't do that! That's not EDM! Or whatever. We never thought about those types of limitations. That is stuff we discovered after making our first album and touring. I think today it is totally different. I was talking on the last US tour that the scene frame-of-mind is falling apart.

IN: I'm not sure. Every year it changes. I've noticed in the past few years techno is becoming increasingly more accepted in this style of music, and that's a great thing. But I always wonder what is going to happen. The sad thing is you are still only getting goats at the shows that you play and it may take awhile before you get a lot of people that may not have any interest in that kind of music.

Montellius: Yes, but I'm not necessarily talking about that.

IN: Yeah, but I think that's my point. Not only opening the minds of people within the scene but also people outside of it.

Montellius: Yeah, I think so. And I think the fact that both we and Apollygma Berzerk are signed to major labels now in Europe will bring a lot of people into this kind of music, I hope.

IN: Speaking of which, are your relations with Stefan [Herwig of Dependent Records] still amicable?

Montellius: I think he was very disappointed that we left the label. And I can understand that. But we got this opportunity and it would have been insane for us not to use it. The label we chose is a very small label. The only difference is that they have Sony and Epic through them. I don't think we would have ever been able to get the other big labels we were talking to because they made no sense. They all said "we will give you this much money and you have to make this many albums" and that was it. No vision.

IN: It's very important that the label you sign to has an idea how to market you.

Montellius: Exactly. And also, it helps if they like your music. If they don't like the music, then it is just a business relationship. If it wanted to make business I would have been a businessman.

IN: I hear you don't wear suits on stage.

Montellius: Yeah, we don't really business suits, though are.

IN: No, I think you wear business suits.

Montellius: They are music suits.

IN: Put that in a press release. The members of Covenant don't wear business suits onstage. They wear Music Suits. Going back to the label situation for a second, I think historically you've jumped labels when it seemed appropriate and I've never gotten the sense there were any hard feelings associated with it.

Montellius: We've always felt that it is better to part ways than to stay just for the sake of staying and get

disappointed in the process. And also, to be honest about these things. To say "we will only sign for one album and if we are happy we'll stay, and if not, we leave." It's quite simple. Some people, like Stefan for example, have been instrumental in Covenant's career for many years. He's been almost like a father to us in many ways, although he's actually younger than me. He helped us a lot. And that's why I think he's disappointed because put all this effort and work into our career. But then again, we helped him too. Our success was his success, and

IN: On every album the first track is the title track. I've also noticed that the first track of the new album is usually the weirdest.

Montelius: We do?

IN: Yeah, at least in the past.

Montelius: I never noticed that.

IN: It seemed like you were setting the tone for the album.

Montelius: Well, the reason these songs are the first on the album is because they are the most important to the mood in the album. We want to set the track order you always hear. So maybe subconsciously the thematic songs are the first when all the songs are together.

IN: So you always start with the first track while you're in the studio?

Montelius: No, the way we do it, we want to have a song but also a typical song as the first track and the second track is usually the strange one. Perhaps not the strangest, but one of the unusual ones.

IN: That's interesting, because I wouldn't consider "Stalker" to be an unusual song.

Montelius: On *Sequencer*.

IN: But *Sequencer*, "Feedback," "Stalker," and "Figurehead." You could just stop right there.

Montelius: It's a bit of a peak, isn't it?

IN: Yeah, the rest of the album is slightly slower as a result.

Montelius: The one thing about that, though, is that we always make the minimum amount of songs we have to. All the songs we have made for the album get on the album. We don't have any choice.

IN: So they all have to be really good.

Montelius: Well, there isn't much use for making bad songs, if you can avoid it, is there?

Part II of this interview occurred with songwriter and vocalist Eskil Simonsson shortly before the release of *Northern Light*.

IN: I've noticed you've been writing a lot more lyrics on the past few albums. I know in the past Joakim was the principal lyricist. How did this transition come about?

Simonsson: Actually, I have been writing lyrics, more or less, since our first album. Joakim is the principal lyricist and I have been contributing according to how my life has been like at the time. During the making of *Sequencer*, for example, I was in a period of change, transition and uncertainty and I felt I had an urge to express myself and also wrote 1 out of 8 lyrics. Maturing as an artist gives you confidence to reach artistic goals and that has made writing easier for every album.

IN: How has living in Berlin changed you?

Simonsson: I became a Metropolitan and experienced a newborn and reinforced vision of how I want to express Covenant's music. Berlin is a very dynamic and vibrant city with an abundance of culture and clubs. Its history is present everywhere and the Berliners are pretty cool about everything and not so easily impressed. Berlin rocks.

IN: It seems like *Sequencer* was about musical depth, *Europa* and *United States of Mind*, in contrast, seemed to be about musical refinement. Is this an accurate assessment? Where does *Northern Light* fall amongst all of this?

Simonsson: I guess *Sequencer* was our tour de force. Made and controlled to the limit and at the right time. Since then we have had, for every album, a more wice-



Clas Nachmansson



Joakim Montelius



Eskil Simonsson

angle focus and have let the music dictate the rules. To let our ideas flow like a mountain river, allow it to seek and find its own natural, inherent expression.

IN: On stage you seem to be the focal point of the band, certainly the band member the audience connects with most. Yet, off stage you tend to be a bit shy and reclusive. Also, you tend to shun interviews. Can you explain this dichotomy?

Simonsson: It's natural that the singer gets the most attention. This is the human part of our musical expression. However, though our music is more-or-less about the end it comes down to basic emotion. Hence the focus on the singer. Being shy doesn't necessarily mean I am also easy going. In interviews, you're reading one now, but I think I have a great ability to explain to people what we're about. We help each other out when it comes to things that needs to be taken care of being in a band.

IN: I know you have your own records. How was it like being in the studio for the first time? Did you have any input in the writing and production?

Simonsson: Of course it was different. I was already looking forward to it. Our producer, Jacob, was great. He was very professional and what each individual brought to the table. I say that the amount of time we spent in the studio was not into this record.

IN: How do you think your producer affected your working relationship?

Simonsson: It was great to have another "member" to discuss ideas with. We could get in the point faster with less frustration and more focus on the creative part.

IN: What kinds of sounds and images inspired *Northern Light* for you, personally?

Simonsson: Everything I have experienced recent years, from movies to break-ups with girlfriends. In a way we are the music we make. It's our life, emotions and dreams filtered through synthesizers and distilled by computers.

IN: Who chose the remixers on the "Call the Ships to Port" single and why?

Simonsson: Both Covenant and our label presents suggestions for remixers. Out these we chose together. So far, Heckmann and Dupont ("Call the Ships to Port") and Ellen Allien ("Bulter") have been our ideas. Ellen Allien is from Berlin and she made a stunning remix of "Bulter." I picked a copy of her album "Stadtkind" in Berlin and have been listening to it since.

IN: With you in Germany, Clas in Sweden, and Joakim now in Spain, Covenant has become truly international. How has this affected the band?

Simonsson: We have always been open minded musically, now also in a more physical sense. Being in a computer-centered band in the 21st Century, distance is not a factor; visions and comradeship are. I see only benefits from a band point of view. Like a daily paper, we can now get first person opinions over the latest developments across Europe. With the Sonar festival in Barcelona and Berlin being just Berlin we probably are present in the two most important cities in Europe when it comes to the cutting edge of the electronic music scene. But of course I miss the possibility to give Clas or Joakim a call on short notice and team up for a jolly game of horse polo or just hang out together.

IN: *Northern Light* will be your first record on a major label. Are you nervous about its impending release?

Simonsson: No, not really. We, as artists, can make music; a record label can hopefully promote it. I'm very happy about our part, the album, and I'm confident our record label, K2/Sony Germany, will fulfill their part. They are very dedicated to this release and are putting a lot of hard work into it. Regardless of how *Northern Light* will work out, it's a great album and I am proud of it. Nothing can change that.

For more information on Covenant, check out their official website at:

www.covenant.dk

<http://www.industrialnation.com>

IN: Whew, it seems like you've been involved in the Industrial music scene forever now.

Tell us your history in industrial music and the history of the DJ? Acucrack project.

Novak: Being an alternative music fan in high school at the time, meant Depeche Mode, Echo & the Bunnymen, The Cure, U2, New Order... and a lot of these bands flirted with drum machines and synths quite a bit. Growing up, pre-high school, I had been a KICKASS metal-head, which at the time meant Van Halen, Black Sabbath, AC/DC... I think that when I heard my first Wax Trax record (Front 242's *Politics of Pressure*, bought solely for the cover art.) I was able to bridge the gap, since I felt a lot of the synthpop stuff was lacking in bite (I remember rallying around "If You Want" from Depeche Mode's *Some Great Reward* as being the darkest.) Having the Wax Trax store 10 minutes from home meant hours and hours of 12" singles, and embracing Skinny Puppy and RevCo, and that whole scene... but I still missed the heartache and melody of the synthpop... so somewhere in my college years, when I began writing a lot of music, a fusion of the early metal, the bleeding heart synthpop, and the aggro-industrial electronics came together as the first Acumen tunes, and from there the deal with Fifth Colvmn Records, and so on... That late 80's-early 90's time was fucking magic, the total heyday for industrial dance music, and we thought with our rocking guitars we were onto something new...

Fast forward to the late 90's, and we felt the scene got totally stuck. Industrial music (IMO) did not evolve or change or develop... there is a certain nostalgic attitude that keeps it mired in the style that launched it (from the 4 on the floor beats, 16th note sequencing programs and Ogre-like vocals) and we just got bored. UK drum & bass was exciting me like my first orgasm and I had begun to develop a lot of electronic music without the need for guitars, so I focused on a new project, which would become DJ? Acucrack. People were instantly into it, we toured quickly with C-Tec, Cubanate, and Curve, and there was a lot of enthusiasm. Meanwhile, the indie-industrial-rock scene was getting shut down, labels closed, bands broke up, fuckers like White Zombie and Fear Factory were getting the credit for fusing metal and industrial (and those guys HIRED their sounds, they didn't evolve them personally) and we got pissed. Plus, we felt that the original industrial scene that nurtured us was refusing to grow, and we wanted more emotion, more melody, more experimentation with beats and rhythms, so in a



DJ? Acucrack

By Kyronfive



CRACK NATION RECORDS

way, we kind of broke up with the scene...

IN: DJ? Acucrack seems like quite a departure from the more guitar-y sound of Acumen Nation. How did that come about?

Novak: Mostly from unused backing tracks from Acumen Nation, and a desire to not muck up all our clean beats and textures with buzzsaw guitars and distorted vocals. We spent so much time trying to fuse styles, and I think that, due to lousy recording budgets and shit, we just ended up never being able to make it sound right... then we would hear Prong or White Zombie, Terry Date-produced shit, and just feel defeated, knowing full well we just couldn't make our ideas sound the right way for 5 grand worth of studio time. So, we split the two, keeping the electronics clean for Acucrack and the metal cranked for Acumen.

IN: How did you end up working with Toni Halliday of Curve on "So To Speak?"

Novak: When we toured together in 1998, we got along really well and became friends. We were out with the Dandy Warhols as well, who were a bit self-absorbed, so there was a much stronger friendship forged between the Crack and Curve communities. I stayed in touch with them, visited London for a bit a couple years later, and just asked Toni... I gave her 4 or 5 tracks off of what would become the *Sorted* album, and she just picked the particular instrumental bed that was "So To Speak" (originally titled "Fearless") and she ran with it...

IN: I heard the video for "So To Speak" is supposed to be pretty awesome. How did that come about?

Novak: A local production company, Astropolitan Pictures, fell in love with the song and wanted to do, I guess, a very elaborate business card... and so they asked to use the song and make a video of it that we could use for promoting the band and they could use to promote their company. Since they financed it, and our label wasn't really paying attention, well... 18 months later, it was finished, we were already off of Emagine, and now, just now, MTV is airing it a bit on MTV2, and we are servicing clubs and boutique shows. It's an amazing piece of work, tons of digital animation, miniaturized sets, and the whole thing was shot for HDTV... Quite a feat... now if only people could SEE IT!

IN: Do you find there is much crossover between fans of Acumen Nation and DJ? Acucrack? Or do you find fans fairly split between the two projects?

Jason Novak isn't just a musician, he's a one-man revolution. As a Chicago native circa the heyday of Wax Trax, an artist in the ranks of such acts as Acumen Nation, DJ? Acucrack, and Iron Lung Corp, producer, remixer, and all-around musician-of-all-trades, he's been there, done that, and bought the t-shirt long before many of us were picking up our first Ministry records. With Acumen Nation, Novak was one of the seminal artists of the mid-90s coldwave scene (if you are old enough, you might remember how frequently "Gun Lover" was played in the clubs), performing live alongside such bands as Clay People and Cubanate. When coldwave's stagnation shifted the scene towards more electro-based dance music in the late 90s, Novak was already way ahead of the trends, crafting his side-project DJ? Acucrack — a project which allowed him to experiment with newer styles of electronic music. Now, in 2002, Novak has reclaimed the entire Acumen Nation catalog and is on a mission (as any good revolutionary must be) not only to bring Acumen Nation and DJ? Acucrack to the masses, but to form a new culture of industro-rockers with his record label-cum-production company-cum-multimedia crew Cracknation. Cracknation, which is associated with Martin Atkins' Underground Inc, is the new home of all Acumen Nation, DJ? Acucrack, and Iron Lung Corp releases and will soon expand to include new artists. Taking a break from the hectic record biz, Jason Novak fielded the following interview questions by email in October, 2002.

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INDUSTRIALNATION

DJ? ACUCRACK

Novak: I find that people who were into Acumen Nation first have great love for the Acucrack, but those who discovered Acucrack first, well, they are mostly electronic music junkies and aren't into metal or industrial... the electronic scene is a fairly close-minded bunch, at least the fanatical ones who we would look to in helping blow things up... but we have a nice little crossover crew, the true Crack Whores, and we have kept things going with them over the past couple years via the our website, releasing exclusive live bits, DJ-Mix CD's, things to keep people with us while we figured out what to do next with our bands...

IN: Tell us a little bit about Cracknation. I've heard that Cracknation is more than just a record label...

Novak: Hell yeah, it's like a STATE yo... Seriously, I started Cracknation even before we were approached by Underground Inc to start an actual label. We started doing production, recording, design and such; even Flash animation and web design, under that name. After we began work on new Acumen and Acucrack records, and had absolutely zero label ties, plus ownership of the Acumen catalog, Martin and Invisible approached us about starting the label and having some control and responsibility that would benefit us much more than just signing yet another record deal... So, with at least 4 records in the planning stages, it seemed like the way to go... now, we are fielding demos from other bands, production requests from bigger companies like Xbox and Digidesign, and hoping to see it all evolve into a nice multimedia venture, a label that can release 5-6 albums a year, most of which written by those of us that run the label, plus do remixes, album production, film and video game work, etc... It is this ethic born of the Chicago/industrial era that fires up multi-headed hydras, with a few people involved with several projects, multiple releases, and tours. I think outside of the rap community, which really thrives on this, bringing up its own ranks and truly invests in its people, and maybe the Korn-Limp Bizkit-Stained-etc line, this incestuous rock and roll ethic hasn't seen much activity since the Jourgensen/Atkins strains of the early 90s... sorry for the run on, but I guess we would like to keep that spirit alive.

IN: Why did you decide to jump into the label business?

Novak: If anything, we are prolific, have a lot of stylistic interests, and I get bored easy. Rather than explore different styles that I am obsessed with in the one project, say Acumen, and risk turning people off with our experiments (such as with the self-released *Strike 4* album which was a disappointment to all, even though we love the songs on it) we can funnel those desires into projects of their own, and keep each one pure. Now, with our own label, whenever I decide to write an album or come up with ideas for songs, we are fueled by the knowledge that when we decide, a time will come when we can walk into a store and see that album for sale, and with our growing fan base, can give them all our efforts at a much timelier pace, then waiting forever for the BIG FUCKING RECORD DEAL that will never come... Plus its exciting, you know... we wrote and recorded 3 albums under 3 different projects with a remix album to boot, and released all 4 in the span of 6 months... without our own label, we'd be shopping that shit left and right, trying to convince this label that this other project would be our main focus, etc... its much more fun this way... not much money involved, no label to rip off for tour support, no pricey release parties and shit, but at least we will hopefully be in the black... and since we happily found a way to co-mingle our guitars with our beats again for the new Acumen Nation album *The Fifth Column* (see, we LOVE our history!) and embrace this

style that brought us the love in the first place, its awesome to use the Invisible pipeline to get the word and promo out to the right people through their network that we are back...

IN: Besides Acumen Nation and DJ? Acucrack, who's on the Cracknation roster?

Novak: The Iron Lung Corp is our new focus, with our second album *Ditch The Attitude*, *Pally* in stores now, our final release of the year. This is basically Acumen Nation with Dan Neet from the Clay People, and its kind of an emo-industrial-metal amalgam... we really tried to pay homage to our industrial dance forefathers, while keeping the metal anthems alive, with some heartbreaking melodies and vocals over the top. It's a real fun fuck-you of a project, a lot of demons exorcized, and we are putting everything into it to make the flagship for the label right now. Things were still hopping at labels like Re-Constriction and Fifth Column when we put out our first album *Big Shiny Spears* with the Nizer Ebb cover on it that started all this... Dan and I really must admit to feeling jaded about what we feel that bands like ours, and Chemlab, 16 Volt and some of the other mid-90s peeps were robbed of, as kids today see poseurs like Linkin Park and Disturbed as "industrial metal" and have no idea about our school and how hard we had it on the tiny labels sowing these seeds years ago... And so, this album is kind of a bitter laugh at our own aging asses, as well as the way this style of music has been cleaned up and mass produced, pulling anything deep out of it and making it MTV-accessible... even though, deep down, any one of us would have taken that step had it been offered us... just maybe not with the fucking major label makeovers and TRL appearances.

IN: Any plans to take any of your projects on the road soon?

Novak: Little tours and weekend jaunts for now, building things up... some of us are in school, have families and jobs, bullshit GROWN UP crap like that, but we are making it work. If the right tour came along, we'd all make the sacrifices to do it, but right now we have to play it safe. Let's just say there isn't an abundant bank account here at Cracknation to blow on tour support and co-op ads, so it's hard to tour properly. I've got 2 beautiful kids that need their shit taken care of... but its not like I don't miss it every fucking day, and spend hours scheming on ways to get our there and tour, play whatever... and I think that struggle is where a lot of our venom still comes from...

IN: Besides Cracknation, Acumen Nation, and DJ? Acucrack stuff, is there anything else you are doing right now? Not that the aforementioned isn't enough, of course.

Novak: Well, ONLY since you asked... I'm finishing up an album from my new project Fawn right now, it's a very saturated and moody band, hopefully evoking the long-lost shoegazer scene, but with its murkiness and reverberation intact. It's a lot of fun for me, very My Bloody Valentine - Slowdive kind of swell. That

should be out by early spring. I'm also embarking on kind of an ambient IDM project with this cat Justin Sinkovich of the Atombombpocketknife, who also founded Epitonic.com and runs File 13 Records... I am also fairly sure that if Dean Garcia ever finishes another Headcase record that we will be gunning to release that album, and Jamie Duffy and I will probably start working with Jared Louche this winter on a new Chemlab album... plus we are super-psyched to being in pre-production on a new Acumen Nation album for release in late 2003...

IN: What's the future hold for you?

Novak: Staying alive, paying the bills, being a kickass-role father, all the while keeping the label going, making more records, and building our audience of friends and fans. We are putting everything we can into growing the label, seeking out funds, and keeping an indie spirit alive at Cracknation, but one that will turn a profit eventually, giving us the ability to make records, produce other peoples work, and tour for as long as people out there will have us. I think it's a dark fucking time for our style of music, from the insult of Electroclash to the retardedness of major label industrial metal, and unlike the totally supportive punk scene, the emo scene, the death metal scene, there is not a mid-level successful scene of industrial rockers and metalheads and digicore kids and labels out there that know their history, respect the independent scene, and support the fuck out of the underdogs who deliver the real shit... and that is what we intend to change...

Visit DJ? Acucrack, Acumen Nation, and Cracknation on the web at:

www.cracknation.com



Absurd Minds Damn The Lie



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The fact that Germany's bio-engineering program has resulted in their ability to clone - not one human being - but Project Pitchfork in its entirety, is the fatherland's most fiercely-guarded secret. That is, until now. Sadly, with the release of Absurd Minds' *Damn the Lie*, the whole world knows that Deutsch technology has advanced to the point that they have not only cloned Project Pitchfork but conditioned the test subjects to release a record that is more authentically Project Pitchfork than any of PP's last three records. Sure, if you never appreciated Project Pitchfork, Absurd Minds probably won't win you over. But, if you've been lamenting that industrial music has lost it's soul since the release of *Io*, this disc may be for you. All ten tracks on this record are solid, from the Teutonic rhythms of "Creators" to the languid boom-shaka-laka of "Silence (Can Be Fateful)." Perhaps Absurd Minds aren't the most innovative band on the market, but their sound is so damn catchy it's hard to care. Tracks like "It's Up to You" provoke whiffs of nostalgia for mid-90s-era elektro before you can say 'wait, this was released in 2001?' What will those German scientists come up with next? [Kyronfive]

Accessory Deadline EP

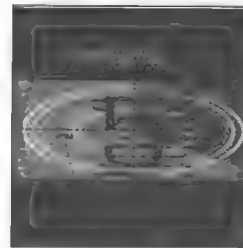


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My first encounter with Accessory was through the Feindflug remix of "War of Emotions," and I found most of this EP to be just as enjoyable. Especially the title track, with its distinctive, distorted vox and a punchy beat that, on the radio edit, put me in mind of Icon of Coil's "Floorkiller." In fact, many of the fast-tempo songs could be almost interchangeable with Icon of Coil. Accessory shows more originality when they slow things down a bit, like on "Fight the Future," a churning mix of synth, old-fashioned drumming, and some well-placed X-Files samples. The trancey re:k.order remix was a welcome change of pace, as was "Braindead 1997," a Skinny Puppy-ish dirge with a ghostly percussion loop.

There's really no new ground broken here, but not everyone can be an innovator. [Theresa]

Acumen Nation The Fifth Column



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Here it is at last, *The Fifth Column*- The highly anticipated first full length Acumen Nation album since 1997's *More Human Heart*. If 2000's *Strike 4* EP left you with an unpleasant "too metal" aftertaste; I assure you that *The Fifth Column* will more than wash that taste away. The machines were fired up and in full force in the making of this album, that will without a doubt soon become a staple in the collection of anyone who considers themselves even the slightest bit "Industrial." Each track is chock-full of charging guitars and licked by the synth influence of Acumen's Jason Novak and Jamie Duffy's drum and bass project, "DJ? Acucrack." Novak's unmistakably evil snarling vocals along with each track being even catchier than the last makes a rather well put together album of industrial anthems. All in all an excellent album, get your boots ready for some serious stomping with this one. Be prepared to have this disc in permanent rotation is your player. This album will definitely make a crack whore out of you. [Aims]

Aiboforcen Sons Palliatifs



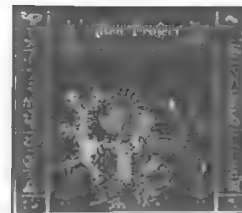
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The newest full length from should-be-legends Aiboforcen comes in a regular version and a 2-CD limited box version (as is normal for all releases on label Alfa-Matrix). This review covers the limited version. It comes in an attractive DVD case, with the two CDs, plus postcards and, oddly enough, a rubber glove. Both CDs are full-length, with the first being the CD from the standard edition, and the second being additional, exclusive remixes of tracks from the first CD. In general the music is all elektro, although the remixes on the second CD take off into other genres. This time, Aiboforcen retains the core of Benoît Blanchart (music) and Seba Dolimont (male vox, samples, and Alfa Matrix labelhead), but now with new female vocalist Laurence Hennuy and additional instruments from Thomas Desamoury.

Looking at disc 1, the standout tracks for me were absolutely the original versions of "Twilight World" and "In 2 Minds" - nearly perfect dance tracks, as good as anyone else out there period, and better than most - although there are a few other strong tracks as well, such as "Freezing Dreams." "Twilight World" is a staple in my girlfriend's sets whenever she spins at clubs and it, 100% guaranteed, fills the floor every time. "In 2 Minds" is my personal favorite, though, and also rips up the floor extremely viciously! I can't begin to describe how absolutely perfect Benoit's mastery of rhythms and quirky sound effects are most of the time! He's so amazing I would actually refer most other bands to Aiboforcen- as an example of how these should be done. Most of the remaining tracks on the first disc are also quite comfortable on a dance floor, with a few slower exceptions. Unfortunately, I don't quite connect with the slower tracks, though, and would recommend the more BPMs, the better the tracks. If I may be so bold as to make a criticism (which I will), I'd actually recommend for the future deemphasizing the slower tracks and sticking with the dance tracks, where they are among the best in the world. If I may make a few more suggestions, it'd be to use even more of the awesome, aggressive, quirky sounds even in the backing tracks, which now sound a little tame or generic, and in general experimenting a little more. But at the same time, I'd recommend a hair more atmospheric and melody as well. But the rhythms and experimentation in the foreground are often a model for all other bands to follow. They deserve to be legends. Finally, I also wanted to specifically mention I enjoyed their cover of The Cure's "A Strange Day." Being a Cure fan, and a fan of the original track, as well as being in general a person who hates covers, this is a compliment coming from me!

Looking at the bonus disc, as usual with remixes, the original mixes are the best - who's going to top !AiBoFoRcEn"-, one of the best acts recording today?! Most of the remixes are consistent in sound with the original artists, and many are quite interesting in the directions they go, so are worth hearing. There weren't too many surprises, though, so if you know the original artists, you can guess where the remixes went. But if you like the remixing artists (awesome bands such as Assemblage 23, IT, and Mnemonic). check them out on the Alfa Matrix website [Sarin]

Alien Project Aztechno Dream



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Ari Linker, the man behind the Alien Project has been going at it since 1994 on his first pilgrimages to the mystic land of Goa. Based in Tel Aviv, Israel (also the home base of such trance luminaries as Astral Projection), he began his music career DJing small parties in the psychedelic trance scene. After deciding to go down the lonely road of producing tracks, he would hook up with Astral Projection in their studio, and work as a sound engineer for Johann Bley (former drummer/programmer for Juno Reactor). Last year, Alien Project's first long play album *Midnight Sun* was released by the important Israeli label Phonokol. 2002 saw a busy year for Linker, with the release of a new album called *Dance or Die* in May of 2002, and not to be outdone, *Aztechno Dream* in the late summer.

Aztechno Dream displays the twisted sound of a mad scientist at his craft. Combining sweet melodies at points with straight mind-bending synth-lines is Alien Project's modus operandi. This is music to twitch to all night with a head full of psychedelics. There is a distinct similarity to the rumblings of the true mad scientists, the Growling Mad Scientists, and indeed, Alien Project has worked with them on several occasions. From the full-on stylings of "Crystal Skulls," "Skunk," and the album closer "DJ Where are You" to the updated remix of Astral Projection's "People Can Fly," (originally released in the mid 90s), *Aztechno Dream* does not relent in its 77 minute voyage through the new sound of the Israeli trance scene. While the whole album rocks harder than a warthog on mescaline, the true highlight is the classic "People Can Fly" remix. A homage to one of the pioneers of the trance scene, this track keeps the original bassline and sample intact, but injects a new sound that shows definitely where things are going. Be forewarned, the Alien has landed. [Bill Causer]

Apogygma Berzerk Harmonizer

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If you bought *Welcome to Earth*, consider yourself forewarned. In the hidden track, Stephan Groth says, "This is the end of the first half, it is time to move on." I speculate he moved just a little too far, at least for his ardent goth/industrial fans. Not only that, but this CD seems overproduced, watered down, and just plain cheesey. That's no surprise since the entire CD was produced by Alon Cohen, primarily known for his production of hip hop and 98 Degrees albums. All the drive and passion that were packed into previous releases can only be found in scarce amounts on this album. Only two songs really stand out on *Harmonizer*: the last vestige of industrialism, "Unicorn," with excellent guest vocals by Claudia Brücken and a somewhat apocalyptic beat, and "Spindizzy," with car sound effects that may just remind you of DJ Keoki's rendition of Speedracer (that could be a bad thing). Altogether, this is an extremely poor effort from a group that brought us great songs like "Non-Stop Violence," "Love Never Dies," and "Soulmaker." As Stephan says in the overwhelmingly corny track "Pikachu," "Why don't you just make it go away?" [Nick Garland]



Aslan Faction Blunt Force Trauma

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The title says it all: hard-hitting electro-industrial for the club set. This impressive second album from the U.K.-based twosome is at its best when it offers up angry, thickly layered drum and synth sequences. In the same vein as Suicide Commando and labelmates Grendel, right down to the raspy voice that not quite sings, but not quite speaks, indecipherable lyrics. I don't know what they're singing about most of the time (murder and mayhem, from the looks of the liner notes) - but they sound pissed off! The songs, for some reason, are listed under two headings on the back of the CD: "Blue Pill" and "Red Pill", a *Matrix* reference, though I didn't find the first half of the album to be noticeably different from the second. The music is also a bit sample crazy, which gets really distracting after a while when you find yourself trying to guess the quote's source instead of listening to the music. Overall, this is good, old-fashioned industrial that pounds and whirs its way through the darkest corners of the human condition, best realized on "Complication" and "Flesh Trader." Lucky Europeans got to see them tour with Feindflug and Hocico earlier this year, and hopefully they'll tour America soon. [Theresa]

Assemblage 23 Failure

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Powerful, evocative EBM abounds on this sophomore offering from Assemblage 23. Even though the album is a reissue on the Metropolis label, it is still pertinent and powerful. The BPM count is almost always high, but that doesn't detract from the vocals in the least. There was a time when catharsis and art were different things for me; this album seamlessly combines the two, offers the listener a taste of the pain surrounding Shear before the album was written and compiled. Especially notable tracks are "Awake" and "Disappoint": both exemplify powerful songwriting combined with excellent inorganic/electronic musical accompaniment. [Brian Clarkson]

Assemblage 23 Defiance

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Contempt was edgy, *Failure* was solemn but *Defiance* is just beautiful. The album starts with the trance-infused "Opened" with the voice of Penelope Cruz telling us to open our eyes in both English and Spanish courtesy of the movie *Vanilla Sky*. Summoning up the spirit of Gary Numan and the archetypal "Cars," Tom Shear takes us on a drumming excursion with the song "Drive." He doesn't stop there in his '80s electronic music idolatry, as the parallelism to New Order runs rather deeply in the pounding track "Document." This dancefloor-smashing song begins with peaceful male choral chanting but quickly breaks down into a swirling maelstrom of bass and trancey synth lines with catchy lyrical snippets (see also: New Order - "Blue Monday"). Although *Defiance* is full of bass-driven uptempo pieces, at least three of the songs are wonderfully crafted synth dirges - "Cocoon," "Horizon" and "Lullaby." Like an early '90s grunge crooner, Shear sullenly sings "Even though I know it's only chemical" over the ominous synths of "Cocoon." Contrasting to the soothing synths is the grinding edginess of "Maps of Reality" with its quick and repeated tinny slamming bass and high-pitched synth strings. Shear gets bonus points for expanding the listener's vocabulary with such words as "assuage" and "litany," compensating partially for the album's pop orientation. The Assemblage 23 sound has matured dramatically over the past few years, partly attributable to flawless production but also to plain and simple creative talent. Overall, this is the most accessible and most pop-oriented album to date. Let's hope that Shear doesn't return to his cocoon any time soon. [Nick Garland]

Autumn Clan Requiem to the Sun

Contact:
Napalm Records
Hammerplatz 2
A-8790 Eisenerz
Austria

A heavily Type O Negative influenced band, Autumn Clan is, well, all right. Not exactly great, but not eye-bleeding bad either. Take half parts whiny mokey goth, half part metal, and now you have Autumn Clan. The album is a brooding, mokey, pit of angst. With a slight metal sound. The guitars are slow and melancholy, but retain that heavy metal quality all of those whom like Type O Negative enjoy. Needless to say, some of the songs are thoroughly cheesey, with titles such as "New Gothicism," "Hate Tunes," "Abuse Me," and "Symphony of Sadness." With titles like those, I'm certain it can be ascertained that the music isn't particularly inventive, and the album is very bland. After listening to it, I didn't want to gouge my eyes out, but I also don't want to follow everything Autumn Clan does. Rather dull, and not innovative, this isn't something I'd particularly want to listen to constantly, but every so often, it's okay. [MalignantFemale]

Backlash Impetus

Contact:
Nilaihah
P.O. Box 82614
Columbus, OH 43202
U.S.

release *Impetus*. Their style lies somewhere between the trip-hop infused Hooverphonic and the more aggressive drum 'n' bass Haujobb circa *Solutions for a Small Planet*. *Impetus* is a compilation of tracks from their debut album of the same name and the *Blind EP*, both released in Sweden. With a trance-like introductory build-up, a sinister backbeat and the beautiful vocal line "I'm supposed to trust in heaven, why am I still left alone," "Anodyne for the Weak" stands out above all the other tracks on the album. The beauty of "Anodyne for the Weak" contrasts heavily with the percussive thud and the heavily processed computer-like vocals of the hardcore track "Impetus," which may just inspire a moment of dancefloor frenzy. The slot b mix of "Blind" makes one imagine a late-night ride on the Autobahn with the convertible top down, wind blowing through your hair as Malin Andersson sings the chorus "Visualize your faith in me and purify my mind." Some day soon, car companies may just discover that the intense and emotional electronic pop of Backlash may just be the perfect antidote for commercial cloning. [Nick Garland]

Balligomingo Beneath The Surface

Contact:
RCA Records,
1540 Broadway
New York, NY 10036
U.S.

of miles away? I don't get it, anyway...). Aside from having a pointless name Balligomingo have also released a pointless album. To call *Beneath The Surface* 'ambient' is an insult to 'ambient'. Let's just say Balligomingo is the N'Sync of the ambient world. The album in general is lame. Every drumbeat on every song is boring and repetitive. While most downtempo artists take great pride in processing and uniquely EQing their drumbeats, Balligomingo just uses the same dull loop on every track-mixing in the drums at such a ridiculously low volume that occasionally they're even hard to find!! But who cares, right? It's ambient so who cares about the beat anyway, right? It's about the sounds on top, right? Ok, so let me tell you about the sounds on top- talk about boring. What I suspect after listening to *Beneath The Surface* is that Mr. Schwartz used nothing but the factory-installed, preset sounds off a cheap 80's keyboard. I mean every flippin' song is made up of the most out-of-date cliched electronic dribble. In the press pack Mr. Schwartz says he started making electronic music in 1998 when he finally located the 'On' switch on his PC. "I'm new to the scene..." he says no kidding!!!! What I really don't understand is how this guy got someone at RCA to sign him and release his album without paying any dues to the scene. Fuck that. This guy should still be sitting at home in front of his computer burning demo CDs for his close friends that won't tell him how much he sucks. [Seth]

Beborn Beton Tales From Another World "Best Of"

Contact:
WTII Records
P.O. Box 13495
Chicago, IL 60613
U.S.

work. I've heard some tracks that are collected here out in the clubs, so the material should all be familiar to Beborn fans or club kids. The second disc is just a collection of remixes - but not just remixes of the songs contained on the first disc. The remix disc makes the purchase worthwhile for die-hard Beborn fans; the collection of more popular tracks makes the purchase a must for casual listeners of synthpop. [Brian Clarkson]

COP International
[www.copint.com]



Soil & Eclipse "Purity"



Here comes the long awaited 3rd full length Album of *Soil & Eclipse*. "Purity" is a remarkable evolution for the band, who already assembled an impressive body of work. "Purity" displays everything that made *Soil & Eclipse* a top act in the electro goth scene - breathtakingly beautiful vocals and music that comes straight from the Heaven. "Purity" shows a level of maturity and intensity that is simply unrivaled. The Album is already released in germany and received raving reviews in all major publications!!

features remixes by *Razed in Black*, *Cassandra Complex* and 2 mixes by *Deathline Int'l*

Record of month [october] in Germany's Sonic Seducer Magazine !!

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in@ripco.com

Bio-tek The Ceremony of Innocence

Contact:
Doppler Effect
P.O. Box 6477
Beaverton, OR 97007-0417
U.S.



Bio-tek is striving to keep music evil. This little example of standard industrial programming and sequencing is spotted with lyrics like "Evil takes a human face/ It takes a human form. / Evil never truly dies/ It waits to be reborn." - "Reborn."

Or the growled and distorted quote from Crowley in "Prayer." I really hope this album is tongue-in-cheek, because the lyrics are so over the top that they're 'almost' comic. I say almost, because I think this was supposed to be a serious endeavor. There's no comic book evil here. [Brian Clarkson]

Black Lung and Xingu Hill The Andronechro Incident

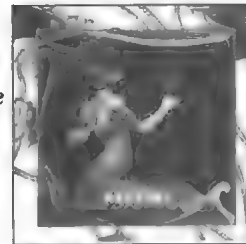
Contact:
Ant-zen
P.O. Box 1257
9313 Lappersdorf
Germany



The Andronechro Incident is the soundtrack to an experimental science-fiction movie that was never released outside of Italy. It's a shame that exchanging independent films can be so difficult, because this disc is nothing if not odd, inspiring, and just plain weird at times. Of course, the standard elements of experimental electronica are found: the mechanized beats, the loops and samples in the background, the feedback. Very little vocals or dialogue exist here; according to the notes on the film (in the packaging) there was little dialogue in the movie as well. The sounds presented here are the backdrop for the movie, and it sound like one strange movie. [Brian Clarkson]

Blood Axis & Les Joyaux De La Princesee Absinthe: La Foile Verte

Contact:
Athanor
B.P. 294
86007 Poitiers Cedex
France



Ya know, there was a time when the CD had the extra tracks and not the vinyl. The two records in this boxset are nothing BUT extra tracks unavailable on the CD.

Last year, Blood Axis (Michael Moynihan & Annabell Lee) and Les Joyaux De La Princesee (Eric Konofal) released *Absinthe: La Foile Verte* on CD. It is quite simply, a masterpiece devoted to the evils, perils, joys and benefits of absinthe past and present. Konofal provided a sound collage of brutal beauty and noise, while Moynihan recited absinthe poetry and Lee provided haunting violins.

If you've never heard of absinthe, it's a French liquor made from wormwood. Absinthe was banned by much of the western world in the early 1900s due

to its tendency to cause hallucinations after prolonged use. Absinthe was used by artists such as Vincent Van Gogh, Edgar Degas and Edgar Allen Poe. England and Czechoslovakia legalized absinthe in the 90s, but it remains illegal in France & the U.S..

The first picture disc (yes, they're both 10 inch picture discs) is a reworking of the tracks on the CD. Moynihan's voice is at times pushed to the almost unnoticeable background, while Konofal provides a newly remixed collage. Konofal adds more turn-of-the-century French recordings to the collage, and the result is incredible. LJDLP clearly dominate the first record.

The second picture disc is the only live performance of *La Foile Verte* to date. This time, Moynihan's voice is front and center, warts and all. At times his powerful voice is inspiringly brilliant. But at other times you want to reach through the record and smack the living shit out of him for trying an English accent (Does that make any sense? Why not fake a French accent if you're talking about Absinthe?). Lee's live violin performance adds a fragile quality to the recording. Sadly, Konofal's sound collage hardly differs at all from the CD. It sounds like he pressed play on the DAT tape, and left the stage to let Blood Axis perform.

This boxset will set you back at least \$50-75. But you get a lot for your money: two picture discs of all new material, a paperback book (in French) on Absinthe, more than 10 postcards displaying the various conditions (positive and negative) of Absinthe's affect on the human condition, and, get this, your very own Absinthe spoon. Everything in the boxset is a beauty to view and to possess.

Immediately after listening to this record, you'll want to board a plane to Europe so you can try real absinthe. At least I wanted to. Shit, I've got my own spoon now. Why not? [Rick Kinney]

Blue Eyed Christ American Whore

Contact:
Ultraplant Records
13741 Burbank Blvd #3
Van Nuys, CA 91401
U.S.

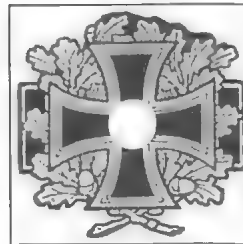


Blue Eyed Christ is the aggro-punk project of Chicago-sound, and KK Records alum John D. Norten-who is most recently familiar to us through a few awesome comp offerings for the likes of Invisible's *Notes from the Real Underground 2* albums. Of course you may also remember the BEC from ReConstriction's classic *Shut up Kitty*, and if you are already a fan of his previous albums *Crash*, and *Leaders + Followers*. *American Whore* contains the 2 tracks from NfRU2, "Suicide Beauty Queen" and "Doll," and "Sometimes" and "What I Mean" from the album *Crash*. BEC is wonderfully lo-fi, heavy, raw, and angry all at the same time-so much so that an unnamed bassist actually contacted John recently about joining the band and offering to "off" himself on stage for dramatic kicks. Of all the tracks on the album I think "Sink or Swim" is the most bizarre in that it has this wacked-out element of the Runaways' hit "Cherry Bomb" with it's sexy grungy "Hello Mom, Hello God" chorus, and CBGB's inspiring guitar work. Lyrically the album rocks with intensity in your face style, much like a processed-free version of old-school Sister Machine Gun. With 17 cuts in total *American Whore* provides a much-

needed installment of real twisted-knife inspired music for people who like it hard and homicidal. [LucastaSin]

Der Blutharsch Fire Danger Season

Contact:
WKN
Postfach 44
1133 Wien
Austria



Yes, the title is goofy as hell and screams "I just learned the English," but don't hold that against it. It's the most impressive "militaristic industrial" release I've ever seen. True brilliance in terms of its marketing, packaging and, yes, even musically.

This is a meaty release: four CDs in a black leather pouch. One CD shaped like an iron cross with 20 minutes of previously unreleased material, one CD of compilation tracks and two CDs of different bands covering Der Blutharsch songs.

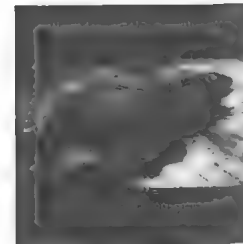
In terms of marketing, this is brilliance. It's a limited edition of 2222 copies. The first 2000 have the leather pouch & fold-out poster, but the last 222 copies come in a 10x8x5 "big" leather bag. And in a move that simultaneously infuriated and aroused collectors; the big bag version comes in different colors of leather: brown, black, and reddish brown. Coming soon to an eBay auction near you. (Does Albin have stock in eBay? Based on all the limited edition stuff he puts out, it makes me wonder...)

Musically, Der Blutharsch is sample-driven, and more often than not, militaristic in themes. There's a strong range of dynamics with DB that is refreshing. There are anthemic songs that make you want to go out and annex the Sudetenland, but also atmospheric, brooding ambient pieces to sip German wine to.

The 2 discs of cover versions really bring this out to the forefront. The truly interesting covers are by bands able to exploit the subtleties of a DB song and make them their own. Death In June do this brilliantly, as does :Wumpscut:, Novy Svet, Scivias, and Of the Wand and the Moon. There are some bad covers though... some seem to be just cashing a paycheck... "Oh! Here's an ambient song! Let's give it a dance beat! OK, we're done." It'll put you back around \$40 (for the non-big bag version), but it's worth it. [Rick Kinney]

Buropolitik Fall and Forget

Contact:
Propaganda
Mailing Address
not listed by request
buropolitik@skynet.be



Buropolitik is the creation of Thomas Verschueren and Stephanie Fraikin, a Belgian duo who make harsh EBM capable of moving bodies and minds. This well conceived of project places the politics of militarism forefront, as lyrics lash out at the shithheads who call themselves our leaders. Buropolitik is on a mission broader in scope than just making dance tracks; they stage a social critique as well.

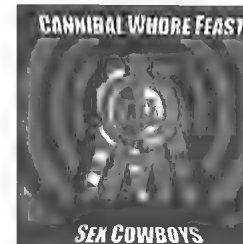
Fall and Forget has as its backdrop dark atmos-

pheres, evolving synths, and distorted beats. This album also features both male and female vocals, a welcome addition, as both Thomas and Stephanie have raw and powerful voices. While this band might be compared to the likes of Suicide Commando, :Wumpscut:, or similar outfits, they truly have a sound all their own. Many of the songs from *Fall and Forget* progress and develop without becoming boring, just as they push things to the extremes without becoming obnoxious.

I'll stop pretending to be objective now; I like everything about Buropolitik-their sound, imagery, and DIY approach. The band confesses to a limited studio on their website, and to the best of my knowledge, Buropolitik is yet to be signed to a proper label, which is sad given this group's talent and potential. Also, you probably won't find *Fall and Forget* in the U.S., which is also sad, but you can contact the band on how to go about getting your hands on this or any of their other releases from their website: www.geocities.com/buropolitik. In addition, you'll want to keep your eyes open for Buropolitik's new release *Tension*, which from a sneak preview (let's just say Thomas and Stephanie are extremely cool!), will definitely appeal to EBM and dark electro fans worldwide. [vnwnr]

Cannibal Whore Feast Sex Cowboys

Contact:
Mephisto Media
2549 W Golf Rd. #325
Hoffman Estates, IL 60194
U.S.



Sex Cowboys is this band's first CD release, and with a name like Cannibal Whore Feast these guys are certainly off to a good start! The first track from *Sex Cowboys*, "More," gets things moving in a really nice direction. While the pulse is energetic and upbeat, the lyrics send a sensual message of loss and regret. Quoting Cannibal Whore Feast: "I am not finished hurting you- this is not over yet. Ya think ya finally made it through- you always knew I don't forget." I'm sure these sentiments are easy to relate to for all of us with a Pepe le Pew complex (the overly romantic cartoon skunk who can never keep his arms around the evasive feline). It should probably be said right away, if you haven't already gotten the impression, that most of *Sex Cowboys* is explicit and sexual. Here's a taste from "666": "Anti-orgasm, negative fuck. The bile rises and the senses suck. Punching holes through your filthy crack, gonna twist, twist the dagger in your back." Maybe some of the lyrics from *Sex Cowboys* boarder on misogynist, that is if these fellas are straight, misandrist I suppose if they're gay or bi. But misogyny is just another word for love, so I'm not complaining, and the general impression I get is more of raw emotion than hatred.

On the critical side, some of the tracks and influences don't do much for me. While this is an eclectic album, the Mephisto Media website describes *Sex Cowboys* as "a case study in Cross-Genre Industrial," I'm not all that fond of the scratching and hip-hop influence found on some of the tracks toward the end (nothing against hip-hop, it just doesn't seem to fit with rest of the album); leave this stuff for the Bizkits and Slipknots, my apologies to the turntablist.

On the hole (pun intended to stay in theme), *Sex Cowboys* is a fun bit of debauchery. The vocals, programming and guitars are fresh and cum together well (again pun intended), things stay interesting all the way through. Perhaps some of the album is kitsch, and maybe even cheese, but this is likely intentional. Cannibal Whore Feast seems to know exactly what they are doing. Oh yeah, one other thing; there's a hidden track to look for, and you guessed it, it can be found on track number 69. [Jon VanWieren]

Chandeen Bikes and Pyramids

Contact:
Kalinkaland Records
Hohnblick 52
60431 Frankfurt/Main
Germany



and new wavy/ dreamy electronics. If you are into all of that girly vocals, acoustic guitar, and accented electronic soundscapes that make everything all dreamy and distorted, you'll like this. The single taken from Chandeen's new album *Bikes and Pyramids* sounds a little too "new age-y" to me. The dreamy electronics ala Delirium are good and the girly vocals have the potential to sweep you away but then added is this very Carlos Santana-esque guitar that makes the song too "adult contemporary." [Lisa Swiss]

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[www.copint.com]



The 2nd album from Germany's *Reversal Penetrations* is harder, faster and even darker than their outstanding debut *"Cut Up Violation"*. A well crafted mixture of EBM, technoid soundscapes and industrial noise blends into energizing tracks that are hitting the floor with maximum impact. *Reversal Penetrations* fire off an arsenal of samples that depicts their abrasive and cynical vision of the world of alienation we live in.

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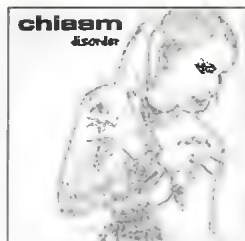
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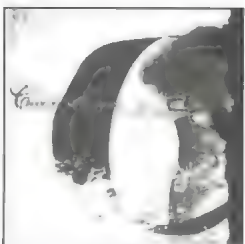
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981 Aileen St.
Oakland, CA 94608
U.S.



I didn't like this album at first, and after listening to it again several times, I'm still not crazy about it. I feel almost bad, and definitely baffled, as Chiasm (one Emileigh Rohn) has received many great reviews for *Disorder*, the Detroit native's first full-length release. The overall production seems sloppy, especially on the vocals, which alternate between garbled whispers and tiny growls, like someone was having too much fun with an effects button on a karaoke machine. This style makes the electro music seem extra cold, which may have been the desired result, but it makes the very emotional, human lyrics seem jarring, too. And the lyrics are very emotional and introspective, working best on the first few songs like "Transparent" and the acclaimed "Fight." But after a while, angst and self-examination gets a bit boring for outside parties. I'm curious to see what Chiasm releases next, as what's been collected here seems like a beta version of possibly very good things to come. [Theresa]

Claire Voyant Love is Blind

Contact:
Projekt
P.O. Box 9140
Long Island City NY 11103
U.S.



Although I cannot stand the pretty, ethereal, female vocal music anymore (I got over it around Loves Spirals Downwards 3rd album), Claire Voyant does have remarkable talent. Sometimes trance-y like the band Curve, other times classically ethereal ala Black Tape for a Blue Girl- each song is very meaningful and soothing. Unfortunately, each song blended with the next and I had a hard time differentiating when one song ended and another began. Oh, well. Good vocals though. And I liked one song- "Abyss." [Lisa Swiss]

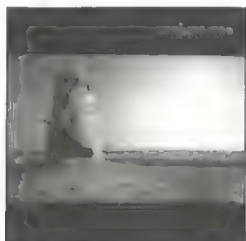
Coil Liquid Soylent 2CD A Guide for Beginners & A Guide for Finishers Fee Lee 103006, street. Долгоруковская 5, ан entrance 13A, " Firm грамзаписи Фи

Russian company FeeLee received reprint rights from Threshold House (Coil's label) to release these two compilations specially assembled by Coil themselves. These two discs were originally compiled for a set of concerts Coil was planning to perform in Moscow, but some copies of these limited edition wonders have made it stateside. The compilations do span Coil's career: tracks from Horse Rotorvator (like "The Anal Staircase") to Autumn Equinox: Regel (like "Amethyst Deceivers") to Music to Play in the Dark. Vol 2 (like "Where are you?" and "Batwings (A Liminal Hymn)"). The packaging is printed almost entirely in Russian (save the actual songtitles, which remain untranslated). There doesn't seem to be any new material on either disc, but the curiosity factor of a set of Coil releases printed in Russian made it worthwhile for me. [Brian Clarkson]



Conjure One S/T

Contact:
Netzwerk America
8730 Wilshire Blvd Ste. 304 Beverly
Hills, CA 90211
U.S.

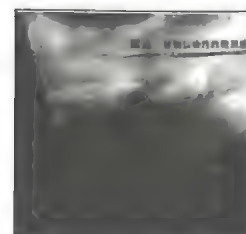


Ok, so if you didn't already know Conjure One is the long-awaited Rhys Fulber (Front Line Assembly, Delirium) solo project. Of course Rhys hasn't been doing anything on the industrial tip since FLA and this new release is no exception. While Conjure One can easily be labeled as 'ambient,' there are some very distinctive elements here. Every song is heavily melodic with thick strings as a constant layer. Samples collected by Rhys' from around the world set up an international, almost middle-eastern theme throughout the album. The first track is a dark intro that almost misleads the listener into thinking that the rest of the album will be a lot darker than it actually is. Track 5 is a bit faster with good song-writing/structure and quality lyrics, while track 6 is almost Portishead-style with an 'ambient-soul' feel to it. My favorite song, however, is track 3 featuring guest vocalist Sinead O'Connor sounding so sweet it actually gave me chills. A few tracks here are really quite overloaded with middle-eastern sounds and Arabian-wailing vocals. For my money if I wanted to listen to straight middle-eastern music then I would.... well.... just listen to middle-eastern music. I want to hear Rhys' interpretation of his influences not a reproduction of those influences. Also, it seems like Rhys is almost afraid to test the borders of the ambient genre. Instead of Conjure One being an 'ambient' album I wish it had just been a Rhys album and shown the full picture of the man's musical interest. In the end, though, Conjure One IS an 'ambient' release and taken at face value it's a top-notch ambi-

ent release. None of the songs are minimal or boring. They are all thick with layers of melody and up-front crunchy break beats. If you liked FLA you'll probably hate this album, if you like ambient at its best you'll love it. [Seth]

Contagious Orgasm The Cause of the Flow

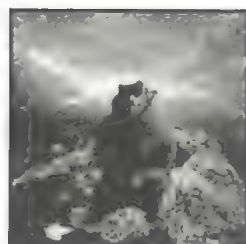
Contact:
Ant-zen
P.O. Box 257
93135 Lappersdorf
Germany



Piano notes, background mumblings, what seem to be 'found sounds' (like paper crumbling or water splashing), almost old Casio-sounding keyboard riffs, acoustic guitar strumming, noise loops and simple electronic beats all meld together to form this Contagious Orgasm release. The sounds themselves are very disparate, but Contagious Orgasm does manage to meld them together almost seamlessly to create a thing of beauty. Some of the almost ritualistic obsession that usually characterizes a Contagious Orgasm release is missing from this one, but it has been replaced with an almost exploratory creativity. The album title would lead one to believe that this effect was, in fact intentional; that Contagious Orgasm is looking for the beginning of the 'creative process', the *Cause of the Flow*. This disc provides all the raw material for any listener to begin to find that cause within themselves. [Brian Clarkson]

C.O.T.A. Marches and Meditations

Contact:
Tesco Distribution
P.O. Box 523
Easton, PA 18044-0523
U.S.



C.O.T.A. (Children Of The Apocalypse) have been making their brand of eco-minded experimental noise since 1989, with a revolving cast of guest musicians, including Ian Reed of Death in June fame. This fifth, rightly named, release is a blend of ritualistic and militaristic percussion, brass, and woodwind instruments electronically enhanced. The resulting sound is unearthly, something that strives to be mystical and unsettling, and succeeds. "Deep Within The Womb Of The Mother Part 4" is a great example of this type of sound, a desolate mixture of chants, tinkling bells, thunder, and droning electric distortion. Fans of ritual-ambient noise won't be disappointed, not even by a deceptively short track listing -- the five songs collected here provide over an hour of supernatural sensations. [Theresa]

Covenant Northern Light

Contact:
KAZ Music Entertainment
Neuer Pferdemarkt 1
20359 Hamburg
Germany



If you were like dozens of other kids on the

Internet rumor mill, you might have heard that *Northern Light* is the first record in the last six years to claim the throne reserved for Covenant's 1996 LP *Sequencer*. And while a few tracks on *Northern Light* do sound decidedly *Sequencer*-esque ("We Stand Alone," "Rising Sun") many more stand on their own merits without being reminiscent of any particular Covenant era. *Northern Light* is an engaging work in its own right. Quite possibly Covenant's most mellow release to date, it strikes a subtly melancholy tone, fused with exquisite melodies and a compelling beat. This is not a record that sets out to repeat the success of "Dead Stars" over and over (although "We Want Revolution" should quell the masses in search of a new club hit). Instead, *Northern Light* has focused predominately on creating mood. The tracks are laid-back and subtle, but with enough depth and layers to keep listeners interested. Covenant's recent shift towards focusing on atmosphere and melody over dancefloor thumps seems to have netted them an overall greater depth and maturity. "Sequencer 2" or "Dead Stars Seven Twelve Times in a Row" this ain't, but that doesn't mean it doesn't have its own quirky, enveloping beauty. Memo to Funker Vogt, Wumpscut, and VNV Nation: you don't have to release the same record over and over again to keep your fans happy. [Anon]

Croc Shop World

Contact:
Metropolis
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Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

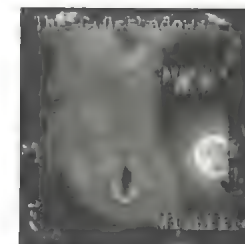


The boys formerly known as Crocodile Shop had a lot to live up to. Their last album, *Order + Joy* was a remarkable departure from their sometimes stagnant sound and certainly a step in a more progressive direction. Although there are a few moments of rhythm and groove on the album, it seems plagued by extremely distorted vocals that get buried under programming more appropriate for albums from the early '90s. "Try" is a nice antidote to the vocal monotony with Hale whispering and then getting emotional with "Why... don't you try now" as some diversity is interjected via electric guitar. The song "Tragedy" has a great drum beat accompanied by some electric guitar fuzz and the ever-so-fun electronic clap. For some reason, I just can't seem to get over all the distortion and vocal echoing. I want crisp clear vocals, or at least crisp, clear gritty vocals. The Flesh Field remix of "Generation" makes me wish Rian Miller had teamed up with Croc Shop for the entire album as she calls out like a siren, "Say something true," echoing Hale as he says "Say something real." With an Atari-like trance laser effect, wildly danceable beat and evil beyond-verbal-recognition vocals, the song "Superficial" is definitely one of the

highlights of the album. But, in "Tragedy," Hale hints that "There's a hole where there ought to be inspiration." I agree. [Nick Garland]

CruXshadows Wishfire

Contact:
Dancing Ferret Discs
526 S. 5th St
Philadelphia, PA 19147
U.S.



The new album by CruXshadows, *Wishfire*, combines elements of VNV Nation (trancy electro) but slowed down a little and darker than the VNV. But I would definitely describe this as a Goth VNV. The vocals and lyrics sound just like VNV, although they could be a little stronger. *Wishfire* is not bad as far as electro-goth goes. It does have its own sound in some songs- soon to be copied by other VNV goth fans. [Lisa Swiss]

cut.rate.box Daseed

Contact:
WTII Records
P.O. Box 13495
Chicago, IL 60613
U.S.



I have followed cut.rate.box from the early days (industrial circa 1993) where we included the track "Hemisphere" on the Industrialnation CD Sound Sampler Vol. 1 (I find it funny that I look through my



THE AGGRESSION FLOOD

THE LONG-AWAITED NEW FULL LENGTH ALBUM OUT NOW!!

Produced by Ash Veneria, F.I. DeSanto and Tom Whitfoot for MGS Productions Mixed by Jamie Duffy (Acumen Nation and BIP Acusack)

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DESIGN ILLUSTRATION WEB DEVELOPMENT CD-ROMS



Industrialnation library and I cannot find a copy of this CD anywhere). Anyhoo, I've really taken to this new direction for cut.rate.box, being more polished and synth-pop friendly but still keeping that Ministry (*With Sympathy/ Twitch* era) edge. Track 2, "Ego," typifies this, bringing me back to an easier day. Track 7, "Enigma," can easily be one of those goth-industrial staple songs that DJs play to death. I think if any smaller electronic group right now is ready to make the move out and make the jump into the big league, it's cut.rate.box. A definite recommendation for all, from the previous cut.rate.box fan to the new "I just figured out who VNV Nation is" music fan. [vlgvlgler]

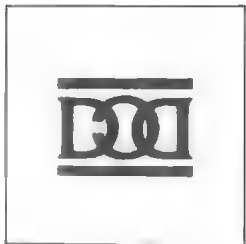
Das Ich Anti-Christ



Contact:
Metropolis
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U.S.

Solidarity is a rare thing in this day and age but the darkwave Das Ich has definitely remained true to their vision and sound with their latest release *Anti-Christ*. If you couldn't deduce it from the title, the theme of this album is definitely biblical in a "Paradise Lost" way ("Krieg Im Paradies"). Unlike Marilyn Manson, who was so anti-christ he became super fucking stupid, Stefan Ackerman, the rail thin and dirt-smeared singer, tells stories, every bit of which is in German and he never once ventures into the Manson "be afraid! I'm crazy Jesus in drag!" realm. Bruno Kramm, the musical half of the Teutonic duo, remains excellent with his Wagnerian way of composition that results in a sound so big, it seems loud no matter what the actual volume is. This is a solid release from a great band and if you get the chance to see them live, definitely don't miss the opportunity to see these guys in action. [nakol]

Dead Can Dance Box Set 1981-1998



Contact:
4AD
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London
SW18 1AA
U.K.

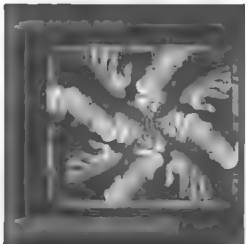
Although Dead Can Dance broke up in 1998, their amazing music will always live on for Dead Can Dance lovers. This beautiful box set contains some

of the most amazing songs from this brilliant duo-Brenden Perry and Lisa Gerrard- spawning from their romantic love for each other and their music in the beginning to their bittersweet end. If you are unfamiliar with Dead Can Dance this is an excellent way to learn more about their various styles of music, which include anything from psychedelic to middle eastern to renaissance. If you are a Dead Can Dance

lover, this is a must for your collection.

The three CD's contain songs starting with their first collaboration in 1981, "Frontier" then moving on to the haunting era that brought us "Cantara" and "Enigma of the Absolute" and going on to the worldly sounds of "The Snake and the Moon" and "Rakim." Also included are radio versions of many favorites like "Carnival of Light" and the darkness of "Ocean" (my fave). A bonus is studio versions of songs that were only available live on *Toward the Within*. The amount of songs on this should be enough to make anyone buy this, but there's more! Also included is a DVD with the live show from *Toward the Within* and some videos. Plus, a beautifully written booklet including interviews with Lisa Gerrard and Brenden Perry as well as the head honcho of 4AD himself, IVO. Buy it now!! [Lisa Swiss]

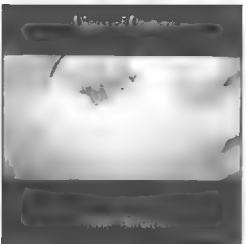
Deutsch Nepal A Silent Siege



Contact:
Old Europa Cafe A.V.S.
viale Marconi 38
33170 Pordenone
Italy

A Silent Siege took eleven years to record, produce, and assemble, and the final product is well worth the wait. Thematically, the disc explores "the right to remain silent ... not having to say a word about anything, the freedom to judge over nothing and no one." (quote from liner notes). Musically, the disc stays very mellow, soft-spoken almost, with layers of vocals, drums, random (possibly found) noise, and organ-sounding synth lines for background layers. This is a complicated disc... almost too complicated to be exploring silence. But, since silence in the Marcel Marceau since is not the point of exploration here, it makes sense that the music here would be dense, thought-provoking, and even creepy in some spots (for example, the way that the end of "Behind the Wall of Silence" is mixed, it sounds like the voice in the background comes from behind the stereo, not from the speakers). This is an excellent and recommended disc. [Brian Clarkson]

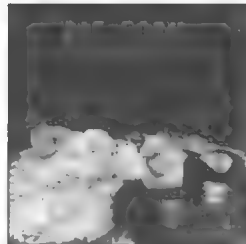
Diary Of Dreams Freak Perfume



Contact:
Metropolis
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U.S.

The sixth album from Accession Records founder Adrian Hates is a rich follow-up to 2000's *One of 18 Angels*. A beautiful combo of piano, strings, synths and above all, Hates' despairing croon make *Freak Perfume* a perfect example of goth done right. Doom and gloom aplenty, but never, ever whiny or insincere. Here you'll find a collection of darkwave songs both mournful and majestic, as in the opener "Trauma:A" and the memorable "The Curse." "Chrysalis" and "Verdict." These show a dreamy, romantic side to the album, while "AmoK" is an electro highlight. Hates' guttural voice is definitely the best thing about *Freak Perfume* and any Diary of Dreams release - a dark compliment to equally dark music. This is the ideal album for a cold, rainy autumn night. [Theresa]

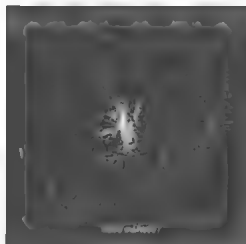
Die Form Lame Electrique



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U.S.

Die Form is one of the most ingenious bands of the last fifteen years. Meshing dancy electronic and hard industrial sounds with hauntingly beautiful vocals without sounding too boring, too droning or too hard is difficult. But Die Form repeatedly does it with ease and *Lame electrique* is no exception. The whole album is a masterpiece with songs spawning their entire career including the Goth club hit "Phenomea of Visitation" (three versions of it!) as well as the spooky "Le Reve" and "Martyrium 1 (The Lovers): The composition of this album is mesmerizing- my favorite yet! [Lisa Swiss]

Dieter Müh Cari Saluti



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U.S.

Dark, versatile, and experimental noise from the Brit duo of David Uden and Steve Cammack, who have been creating such soundscapes under this particular name since 1994. By turns ambient and rhythmic, different sounds have been found, manufactured in a studio, or performed live, making this album a good cross-section of the band's output. Some tracks clock in at over ten minutes, while others last less than fifty seconds, and all are masterfully produced. One song may offer little more than the low hiss of static and a garbled vocal sample; the next boils over into a merciless wall of screeching feedback. "Serves You Right," with its chest-rattling bass demands attention and "Shi Take" is an interesting mix of the organic and the mechanic, a choppy white noise dirge that eventually absorbs sampled bongo drums and erotic sighs. It's difficult to tell the live tracks like "For Pete's Sake" apart from the rest of the album, which is a testament to Dieter Müh's talent, and overall *cari salut*i is an imaginative, schizophrenic piece of work. [Theresa]

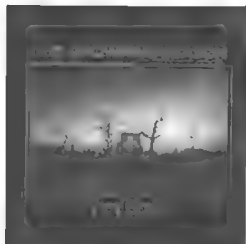
Dismantled Dismantled



Contact:
Metropolis
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Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

This debut CD from Gary Zon, a.k.a. DISMANTLED, is a killer- don't be thrown off by the unassuming image of a space Invader-like creature on the cover. Industrial music fans who have been longing for another Tactical Neural Implant would be remiss not to give this album a listen - there are nine beautifully constructed and hauntingly melodic tracks here. The piece "Dystopia" is the one that first caught my attention with its' subtly distorted vocals that blended in perfectly with the symphonic keyboards going on in the foreground. The key thing about this album is that each track (with the exception of the breakbeaty "Shift") is driven by the melody, not the beat and this is a refreshing change from the techno/trance influence present in a majority of recent industrial releases. Listening to this album reminded me of my days in high school when I got harassed for liking Skinny Puppy and rekindled some of the fierce adoration for the music that made getting messed up for it worth something. [nakol]

The Drowning Season Hollow



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These days it just sucks to be a true Death Rocker. I am serious! Good Death Rock is hard to come by, and I don't mean that awful Vampire Gawth (Two Witches- hahahaha!) crap. I mean there hasn't been any honest to goodness D. Rock. Not one good "Fields of the Nephilim, candleabras and alters, pre-Valor being stupid, Some Girls Will Wander By Mistake, Bela Lugosi" Death Rock album out in frickin' ages. Shit, any amazing Death Rock album circa 1984 is worth about 4 bucks unless it's some crazy ass Sisters of Mercy release or Virgin Prunes box set. (Although I am sensing a revival coming shortly. Keep an eye out for DeathRocknation.) The Drowning Season's *Hollow* is the closest non-demo release I have found worthwhile since Usherhouse and Shadow Project 8-10 years ago. It's not the most amazing D. Rock I have heard, but it has potential. Although sounding a bit too much like Mission UK (who I always thought were the pansies of the underworld), the heavy bass lines are prominent and the intense guitar riffs are very well thought out. The vocals are pretty much what you would expect from a Mission UK/ Sisters of Mercy influenced band, but they aren't awful. I do think they should leave out all keyboards, leaving more room to expand on the talented heavy guitar and bass, making it true Death Rock. Maybe they don't want that. But I do! I want to hear more of heavy, melodic guitar and bass but that's pretty much close to impossible to find in this VNV Nation day and age. All in all, The Drowning Season's debut release, *Hollow* is super tight and really dark. If you have any Death Rock roots and

are still waiting for our D. Rock day to come, like I am- this isn't a half bad CD to pick up. [Lisa Swiss]

The Echoing Green The Evergreen Collection 1994-2001/ The Evergreen Annex



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The Echoing Green has always been one of the more prolific and fan-friendly bands in the synthpop underground, and this year has been a particularly good one for the group's fans thanks to these two outstanding releases from A Different Drum. *The Evergreen Collection* is a two-disc set that covers the group's entire career up to this point, compiling 17 of the group's most popular songs on the first disc and 14 remixes on the second. Old favorites like "Defend Your Joy," "Science Fiction," "Oxygen," "Thief," "She's Gone Tragic," and "Supernova" are all present and accounted for on disc one. If you're a fan of upbeat synthpop that blends both male and female vocals and isn't cheesy you can't do much better than the first disc in this collection. The second disc mixes things up between familiar and previously unreleased remixes. Of the new mixes, Monolithic's "Dawn's Early Light Mix" of "Face of God" and Echo Image's remix of "Heart With a View" stand out. The remixes offer more eclectic fare than the tracks represented on disc one, with everything from the heavy guitar driven remix of "Atmosphere" by Run Level Zero to the classic synthpop sound on the Anything Box remix of "Second Chance" to the acoustic beauty of the "Aurora (Chamber Mix)."

The Evergreen Annex EP, meanwhile, offers eight additional remixes, focusing on trancey, club-friendly versions of "Supernova," "Liberation," and the Echoing Green's cover of Joy Division's "Ceremony." Deepsky turns in an inspired trance-breakbeat mix of "Supernova," but the disc's real highlight is probably Dreamtraveler's mix of "Ceremony." System 22 turns in a couple of excellent mixes as well. This one comes highly recommended for fans of trance and synthpop. [Daniel Slaten]

EHI Heritage Gallery

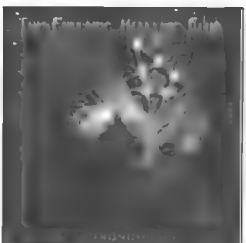


Contact:
Brian Noring
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Des Moines, IA 50317
U.S.

Now please don't get me started on power electronics again. The genre's been corrupted by tons of shit made by tons of uninspired (and of course distorted) push-buttons trying to advocate their crappy political 'opinions' with their crappy self-called music (now give me a minute to wash my hands after writing this, I don't want them to infest me with the kind of lame Nazi horror they call their 'opinions'). Right, but I suppose this is not MY fault, is it? The words 'noise ambient' became a synonym for hours of very loud and very flat and very samey boredom and you can't sleep in front of it because it's just sooo loud and you'd like to cause it's sooo boring. Right again, but should you really blame ME for that?

So what? Clichés? You mean them sampled vocals (from gore films, porn films, and now manga, of course), them sound collages Nurse With Wound would have thought clichéd in 1985, the omnipresent white noise and these various feedbacks, buzz and hisses that always seem to come from the same broken amplifier and then processed through them higher-than-odb-dynamics compressors? So why don't we talk about clichés in electronica? You know all this thinking you're talented because you don't answer your emails and speak only with monosyllables and own the biggest arty-farty G5 and the biggest arty-wanky 78" monitor and are full of contempt and make the most unoriginal form of commercial techno but you're using pops and clicks instead of drums so you call it avant-garde art and all? I warned you: don't get me started on power electronics. Okay, so if I want to review a pure power electronics/noise ambient record here, I guess I'm allowed to, ain't I? Because I liked this one. Good heavy atmospheres, you can listen to the tracks twice without instantly yawning, and there's a refreshing humour as well (is that guy talking in a very tired voice about how he should make a split tape only self-derision?). And this one-person label's got a catalogue that's well over 100 references including much more acoustic soundscapes and tons of splits/collaborations! Now that's what I call an active independent label! This record's too long, you say? Of course it is, but would an issue of this be the same without someone not saying ONCE some record is too long? [DDN]

The Electric Hellfire Club Electronomicon



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U.S.

The Electric Hellfire Club has trekked completely full-circle since the golden years of Burn, Baby, Burn and the late, much missed Dr. Luv, with their latest full-length offering to Satan, *Electronomicon*. The album is by far the most redefining work of the group to date, with the now semi-familiar core line-up of Thomas Thorn, Ricktor Ravensbruck, and Sabrina Satana. After a hideously disastrous experience from *Venom* and back recording 2000's *Witness the Millennium*, the band was eventually rewarded with the opportunity to record the ultra guitar-driven *Electronomicon* at Abyss Studios in Sweden, under the watchful eye of black metal guru Tommy Tagtgren. The end result is an amazing collection of work that genre bends the dark arts like nothing else out right now-with 13 sinister tracks including the soon to be classic metal hits: "Song of the Serpent," "Whores of Babylon," and "This is the Zodiac..." which lends the required serial killer element needed for any good Hellfire record, the deck is stacked in EHC's favor! Then there is "Hypochristian," the obvious stand-out track, that is just plain catchy as fuck with its, "Hypochristian, where will you go?," accusatory refrain--that anyone who has ever been accosted by obnoxious narcissistic bible-throwers can thoroughly enjoy! (Plus it has some very typical kitschy EHC samples, as does the equally creepy and addictive eighth song "I Dream of Demons.") Interestingly, the only track to have an overly synthy sound is "Tannhauser Gate," but I promise you really

won't miss the full throttle synth of older EHC, because *Electronomicon* is just that damn good! And yes, "Mr. 44" will always remain my favorite Hellfire tune of all-time, but I can honestly say *Electronomicon* is quickly becoming my favorite album from the group. Definitely make sure to seek this one out, and let its awesome Giger-esque art-work beckon you to take a trip down the stairwell to hell that you won't regret in the morning. [LucastaSin]

Elfman
Common Sky

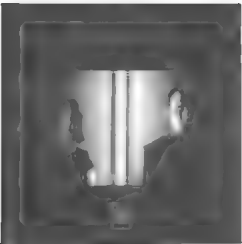


Contact:
WAB Productions
Altenberg St. Johann
718295 Haide
Austria

Elfman has me torn. These four Austrian lads have definitely been listening to a lot of Korn. They play their instruments well, but why the hell? This shit sounds like Korn! Enough of the rhyming; which is something else these guys try here and there in old school fashion on *Common Sky*. It's gotten to the point where pretty much anytime you have a full band member who's instrument is listed as 'turntables', you already know what your in for. When rock hop bands first started doing the turntable thang it was kind of cool, a new idea, and the scratching worked well between the guitars. But we as a culturally progressive people and society need to ask ourselves: do we need any more of this vinyl masturbation? Besides, it's not good for the needle! Don't get me wrong, the turntable will forever have it's proper place as a music playing device, as an experimental sound tool, and as a party starter amongst the real Mix-Master Mikes, but in the rock setting it is already so over done, don'tcha think?

The problem with going totally negative on *Common Sky* is that if you're into this style, Elfman is right on top of it. Mix-wise, this album sounds really good, the guitars are crunchy, and the vocals cut right through it all. The singer can really wail it out too; he's got an excellent voice. Elfman can play for sure; it's just a matter of what they are playing. I have no desire to put this one back in my CD player, but if you like Korn, I'll send you my copy. [Jon VanWieren]

Epsilon Minus
Epsilon Minus

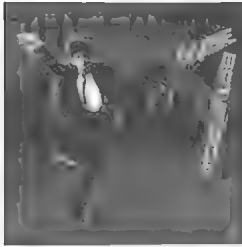


Contact:
Alfa Matrix
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1040 Brussels
Belgium

Epsilon Minus' new self-titled release is very good. Jennifer Parkins' voice is beautiful. Bogart Shadwick creates some strong beats and lovely melodies, which blends perfectly with the lyrics and voice of Miss Parkin. The very electronic sound to this album gives one the urge to dance. Or at least bob your head in time to the beat. "Freedom" is a seven minute long ballad, and Miss Parkin sings like an exhausted angel who is simply tired and mildly disgusted with everything. "Wasted Years" has a fast-moving beat, which is perfectly executed by Mr.

Shadwick. Miss Parkins' voice sounds particularly thereal on "Wasted Years" with her soft-pitched, yet strong vocal stylings. I loved this album, and can't wait to see what else Epsilon Minus has in store. [MalignantFemale]

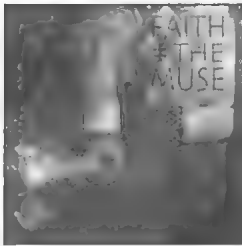
The Faint
Danse Macabre



Contact:
Saddle Creek
P.O. Box 8554
Omaha, NE 68108-0554
U.S

Scrape up the cash and buy the album that's kicked the music industry's ass for the past year - these fuckers from Omaha, Nebraska are making music for people who dance to every song and could take over the world if they gave a shit about it. If Gary Numan had five disturbed younger brothers, dressing like him from the cover of *Replicas* and ganging up to make an album, *Danse Macabre* would be it. This third release from The Faint loses the noisy and experimental segways on their sophomore release *Blank-Wave Arcade*, and replaces them with structured beats and more of those gloriously exaggerated synth riffs. With the current focus on Electroclash in music mags everywhere, it's strange that The Faint have been largely ignored - perhaps their status as indie rock darlings pigeonholed them... but do you care? *Danse Macabre* is thirty-five minutes worth of intelligent and highly infectious music that will make you dance all twitchy-like or punch you in the face (and who wants to be punched in the face?). [nako]

Faith and the Muse
Vera Cusa



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This two CD set contains two very different sounding CDs- thus showing the extremely diverse sounds of Faith and the Muse. I, for some reason, listened to this "backwards," meaning I listened to the second CD first. The second CD, entitled the 'Night' CD, starts with a live set which they write was live in "heaven" but I personally feel they could have sounded better. I have seen them live, and this isn't even close to what they sound like. The production and the sound is extremely poor. It doesn't give Monica Richards' live vocals the credit she truly deserves. After the live set, there are 7 remixes of various old songs and this, too, didn't sound pleasing. The songs "Elyria," "Mercyground," "The Silver Circle" etc do not need to be touched- and definitely do not need to be remixed as if they were Switchblade Symphony songs. Needless to say, the "Night" CD bored me.

The other CD, the 'Morning' CD, contains a compilation of appearances, covers and acoustic versions. This CD makes this actually worth buying. Rarities like the cover of "Running up that Hill" by Kate Bush, "Patience Worth," "The Breath of a Kiss (demo)" and "Mutual Land" show what Faith and the Muse are really made up of a truly intelligent and

artistic band. With the right production, Faith and the Muse could conquer all. [Lisa Swiss]

Fields of the Nephilim
Fallen



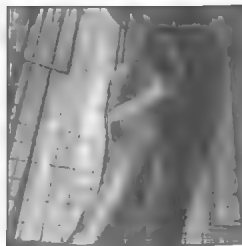
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I absolutely love Fields of the Nephilim. I am not kidding. I LOVE them. They are #5 on my top ten favorite band list. Do you remember back in the early eighties? Before "Goth"? Back when Death Rock was still reminiscent of early punk? (well, try!!) Fields of the Nephilim was one of the best Death Rock bands. They had a way of combining dark biblical theatrics with spaghetti western guitar riffs, growly yet unique vocals and creepy, moody intros- and making it sound amazing. Plus, their western attire and imagery was perfect. They are one of a kind. Pick up their album *Dawnrazor*. It will blow your mind away. By far, one of the best Death Rock albums of all time. When they ended back in the early nineties with their album simply titled *Nephilim*, they went out with a bang and left smoke still flowing lazily behind them so as to not ever be forgotten.

So, you may ask, what about this reunion of Fields of the Nephilim and their new album, *Fallen*? Well.... I have to admit, I was very excited when I found out about *Fallen*. Not being too naive when it comes to old bands trying to do a comeback, I knew it wouldn't be like the ole days of "Mr. Jealousy" and "Trees Come Down." With original members, Carl McCoy and Tony Pettitt, doing all of the writing and performing- I knew *Fallen* wouldn't be horrible. And it's not. But something is definitely missing. First of all, bottom line is, *Fallen* is just way too over produced. Fields of the Nephilim was meant to be heard raw, rough. Second, the guitar is all wrong!! My beloved western sounding, rough cowboy riffs are gone! Instead they are replaced by these fast, super metal ala high energy NIN guitars. It's is just not the their sound at all.

Some years ago, Carl McCoy came out with his solo project called Nefilim (not to be confused with the last Fields of the Nephilim album with same title but different spelling). In fact, I believe I reviewed his album for this same magazine! Anyway, it was pure METAL! Fast, crazy, death metal. So I am not surprised by the change in guitar on *Fallen*. And I guess maybe they want to develop a new sound. I mean, the songs are good, well written and thought out. And I have to admit, there isn't much out there music wise like this. But, I still yen for another *Dawnrazor*. Another *Elizium*. My heart will always be full of "Love Under Will." PS: At least now I will get to see them live! Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!! [Lisa Swiss]

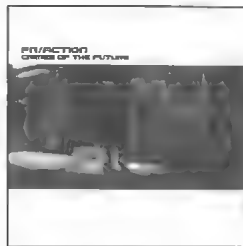
Forced Cherophobia



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In a scene that's become syrupy sweet with gobs of soda-synth-pop being poured into it, it's good to hear some electronic music with balls. Ever since Cubanate went to ca-ca and Numb split the picture, there hasn't been much hard aggro electro to get excited about. A cross between Hocico (esp. in the vocals) and older Funker Vogt (in the beat and bass lines), Forced delivers in-your-face industrial. Perfect for stomping on the dance floor- or somebody's face. There are fourteen tracks on the disc, of which there a several remixes, some from the likes of Diverje, Control.org, and C2. "Nowhere to Hide" is easily the best track on the disc. All of the four versions of it are great, so it's difficult to pick which is the best. With the exception of a couple of tracks that are lacking somewhat in production if not content (one of them being a lousy remix), *Cherophobia* is a solid freshmen effort. [Cosmo]

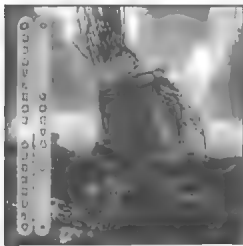
FR/ACTION
Crimes Of The Future



Contact:
Cohaagen Music
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Oakland, CA 94604
U.S

After listening to this dreadful, uninspired album, I have come to this conclusion: The only crime that *Crimes of the Future* is guilty of is petty theft. The charges are as follows: monotone vocals, wannabe bad boy "IOM a criminal? No, really, I am! Seriously, guys" lyrics, stealing Fictional and Seabound's style, and sounding like every other synth-pop band from C98. I think the only songs on this album that are even remotely worth a listen are the songs "King of the Streets (part 1)," "Rolling Thunder" and "King of the Streets (part 2)" and even then, that's only because they're all instrumentals. I like "King of the Streets part 1) the best because it's only 44 seconds long. On the other hand, if you love Fictional's "Fictitious," Covenant's "United States of Mind," Apoptygma Berzerk's "Seven," and early Ravenous, then this might be the album for you. Because they sound like that is who they are trying to be. It sure wasn't for me. But, then again, this is just one person's view. You don't have to take my word for it. [Rabbit von Hasenpfucker, Esq.]

Front Line Assembly
Epitaph



Contact:
Metropolis
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U S

It seems like most people in the scene have some opinion on Bill Leeb -- the guy people love to hate. Maybe you've been pissed off by his tirades against clubs and fans (possibly in the pages of this very magazine,) or laughed at at least one hysterically funny website damning him, or gotten into arguments with your friends over whether or not he could take Ogre in a round of Rivethead Celebrity Deathmatch. Or maybe you've danced so hard to an FLA song, sweat plastered your T-shirt to your back and your legs offered little support. Love him or leave him, there is no denying that Bill Leeb is a tal-

ented musician and fronts one of the genre's longest-running and most-influential bands. *Epitaph* is of course the latest release in a career spanning fifteen turbulent years. Whether it is the last release from FLA remains to be seen, though it is the final pairing of Leeb and Chris Peterson, partners in aural assault since 1990's *Caustic Grip*. If you haven't liked FLA since Rhys Fulber left, I'm not going to try to change your mind; if you're a die-hard fan, you most likely own *Epitaph* already. But for those still sitting on the fence trying to decide if this CD is worth owning, know this: this is not a bad album. It's not FLA's best, either. *Epitaph* is densely layered with electronics that shift between trance and heavy percussion work, often in the same song. Leeb whispers his was through an album about a world approaching extinction (yet again,) but more than that, one gets the feeling that this introspective album is a send-off for FLA as well - "A quiet moment to myself, reflecting somewhere in the past, I hope this feeling always lasts," he hisses on "Everything Must Perish." It would be an ideal memorial for a once-great band, as a lot of the songs contained here sound identical to earlier FLA offerings, Front Line Assembly covering Frontl Line. For example, "Dead Planet" is reminiscent of "Plasticity," "Everything Must Perish" is similar to "Sadomasochism," and "Krank It Up" would do just as good a job of packing a dancefloor as "Columbian Necktie." Those were good songs, so then are these. But you could just listen to the originals. Not everything is reshaped, however, as the influence of Leeb's various side projects, namely Delirium, is felt in the music, working best on the haunting "Existence," and the whole album is thankfully free of Event Horizon samples (Damn you Leeb! You kick-started an irritating industrial music cliché!) After such a long career, it would seem almost forgivable to recycle bits of a such a formidable back catalogue, but I for one expected something new from a group that claims it is full of fresh ideas. *Epitaph* has a nice, solid sound, but it is a sound that has been heard too often before. [Theresa]

Funker Vogt
Date of Expiration



Contact:
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Germany

This import single from the forthcoming album *Survivor* offers up the trademark Funker Vogt sound that has made this band a staple of the scene. Combining the distorted growls of Jens Kastel with the familiar beats of many past Funker Vogt songs, especially that found on the last album, *Date of Expiration* also has a melodic, catchy synth thread running through it, a la Fictional, which makes it enjoyable. The synths are best showcased on the



"expired" mix and built upon nicely in the "fresh" mix with the help of piano. The final song "Traumatic Event" ("A reply to 'Stupid Incident?', " I first thought) slows the mood down a bit. Fans of recent Funker Vogt endeavors will get the most enjoyment out of this single as all of it could've been lost tracks from *Maschine Zeit*. [Theresa]

Funker Vogt
Survivor



Contact:
Metropolis Records
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Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S

There's no need for me to tell you how eagerly I was looking forward to this release. However, when I got it, upon the first few listens, I was totally let down. *Survivor*, in my humble opinion, sounds too much like *Maschine Zeit*. One of the things that I liked the most about Funker Vogt was the fact that every album sounded a little bit different. Unfortunately, this was not the case with *Survivor*. Now don't get me wrong, I did like most of the album. I guess that, after the release of the 2CD set, I was expecting this album to have more of the impact on me than it did. But, nonetheless, I liked it, as a whole. The beats were strong, the music was better orchestrated, and, for the most part, the lyrics were great. Favorites on the album were "Obscure Pictures," for its strong beats, "Faster Life," and "Red Queen." All in all, I thought that it had nice lyrics, with the exception of "Final Thrill," "Date of Expiration," and "Compulsions." Example: "Give Me Golden Showers/ Give Me A New Thrill??" on "Final Thrill." Gunter, I didn't know you were into that, you sick bastard!

Still, the lyrics are a lot better than the lyrics to "Shaven" off of *Execution Tracks*. Also, as was the case with "Date of Expiration," they're actually singing a song about love. I thought they were all about being militant. You never can tell with Funker Vogt. The song that really got my goat was "Compulsions," which is about being addicted to morphine. Not really such a positive message to be sending out, is it? I see how the song is a story about a soldier who was left to die with shrapnel in his leg and he takes the morphine to help deal with the pain, but then he becomes addicted to it. But even still, if taken in the wrong context, people might think it's cool to start shooting up morphine because they might think that the band is praising it. Or even worse, what if some parents group gets a hold of it? Remember in the '80s when we had all those controversial censorship hearings? Who wants to relive that? Keep in mind, we have yet another censorship hungry republican in office. Bad move, guys. A real bad move. [Rabbit von Hasenpfucker, Esq.]

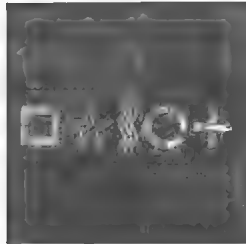
Fuxa
The Modified
Mechanics of this
Device



Contact:
Antenna
P.O. BOX 6083
Burton on Trent DE142ZX
U.K

A record starting off with a Suicide cover can't be wrong, don't you think? And that Suicide cover features Spacemen Sonic Boom on vocals and is one hell of a psyche-pop hit. But what about the rest, my boy, is it worth getting this record just for that song (it is), and how am I going to trick my little sister into buying this with her birthday money (the way you cope with your own personal little treason is your own little problem) and all. You definitely should buy this with your own money because I think your little sister would listen to it and then keep it. It's mostly, er, ambient, you know, and very different from the song it starts off with and travelling through synth-only melodic tracks and somewhat dub things layered with other warm and analogue sounding (emulated?) ARPs and SH-101. And some pop again, further in the record. And though it keeps brilliantly short enough, it takes time to travel through a lot of different places. I bet Mr Klaus Schultze could've been doing this sort of music if them hardware instruments manufacturers had emphasized the sound instead of the interface. If I had a taste for stupid jokes (I have) I could easily say this is moogy blues. [DDN]

God Module
Perception



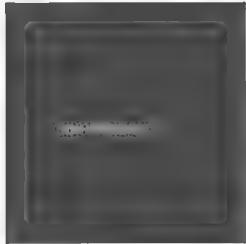
Contact:
Sector 9 Studios
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Winter Garden, FL 34778
U.S

I believe this is God Module's second release, and from what I recall this is a little more accessible than their debut. It's very trance-influenced EBM, at times perhaps even a little too trance-influenced, but quite catchy and dance-friendly. The title track is the most trance-influenced, but it's not bad. The second original track, "Transcend," is an awesome

dance track with some very nice melodies thrown in! Finally, Interference is pretty Funker Vogt aggro, and more elektro, which always makes me happy, too. The Infekktion and Grendel mixes go even more EBM than their originals, with Grendel adding samples from a movie I know I've seen, and it all works. The Infekktion mix also adds some truly amazing background sounds that really enrich the track! The Cultur Kueltur, meanwhile, ups the future pop factor (i.e. keeps the trance, but makes it more punchy, and emphasizes the song structure more). I want to like Dismantled more, but they're just too slow and introspective for my tastes, and that comes across again on their mix here. Parallel and Cut.Rate.Box make boring trance remixes of arguably the best song on the disc (Transcend), so I'll stick with the original. Finally L'ame Immortelle's mix of "Interference" was surprisingly uninspired and uncatchy - it wants to be a floor filler, but falls a little short for me - while Stromkern's mix of the same track was surprisingly sparse and slow, although well produced, but again not to my tastes. I can respect what I think they were trying to do, however.

In general, it was usually pretty catchy, sometimes very much so, with good dancefloor beats. I can't make out the lyrics easily, which is probably also for the best. My main criticism is there are too many trance cliches and standard trance sounds. More quirkiness and originality in general would be appreciated. Overall, I enjoyed it, though, and would recommend it to others. [Sarin]

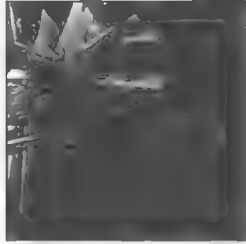
Gothminister
Angel



Contact:
Tatra Records
Box 96
N1451 Nesootangen
Norway

The new EP from Gothminister leaves something to be desired. There is nothing new or innovative about this coldwave/industrial band. Quite frankly, I think guitar oriented industrial is sorta dated. And the evil growly vocals as well. Unless done well ala :Wumpscut:, it shouldn't be done at all. [Lisa Swiss]

Haujobb
Penetration CDS

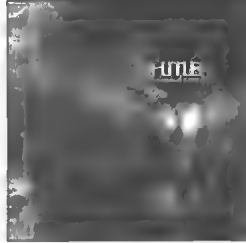


Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

After completely snubbing their noses to the industrial fans that made them popular, Haujobb returned with *Polarity* as the antidote to the minimalistic technoid *ninetynine*. Now, with even more force than before, they deliver us to a new level of EBM with the *Penetration* single as a teaser for their upcoming album *Vertical Theory*. This is a 10-track record, but only consists of four songs, only two of which are new. So, seven of the tracks are remixes of *Penetration*, which at times can become completely monotonous. One might think that remixers such as Forma Tadre, Converter and Assemblage 23 would lend some form of variance to the record. Although the original song is very good, the remixing treat-

ment seems clonal. The best mix on the record is the Assemblage 23 Remix. It, and the Forma Tadre Remix are the only ones that manage to sound like a re-interpretation rather than sounding like duplications with a few added blips. Give this CD a listen, but don't let the remixes taint your anticipation of the upcoming album. [Nick Garland]

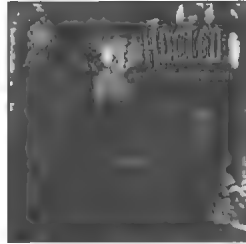
HMB
Great Industrial Love
Affairs



Contact:
WTII Records
P.O. Box 13495
Chicago, IL 60613
U.S.

What do you get when you stick Haujobb, Claire Voyant, In Strict Confidence, and Lights of Euphoria in a five disc CD player and then press play? HMB, apparently, although the resulting sound is probably not what you would expect. Comprised primarily of Haujobb ringleader Daniel Myer and Clare Voyant vocalist Victoria Lloyd with ISC vocalist Dennis Ostermann dropping by to sing lyrics penned by Lights of Euphoria's Torben Schmidt on one track, HMB might be the industrial name dropper's record of the year. While HMB is patently elektro in its stylistic leanings, Myer name checks EBM, techno, and trance enough to keep the sound interesting. Hitting its stride by track 3 with "This Fire," Myer's moody, beat-laden elektro soundscapes are the perfect frame for Lloyd's lush vocals. Spanning between the atmospheric swirlings of "Revelation" to the pummeling beats of "Turn to Stone," HMB dishes up a bevy of moods while maintaining its dancefloor composure. In all, an intelligent, enjoyable release. [Kyronfive]

Hocico
Signos de Aberracion



Contact:
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U.S.

Residing in the industrial wasteland of Mexico City, Rasco Agroyam and Erik Aicrag live and breath pollution and decay. These aren't mere themes in Hocico's music, they are Hocico's music. Listening to Hocico, one also hears stories of pain, abuse, suicide and death. Hocico combine the contradictions of our modern world: progressive high-tech cyber intensity on the one hand, and dystopian toxic human waste on the other. The band explains on their website: "Hocico is our way of living and of thinking, it is the way in which we see the behavior of the world, and how hope, deception and hate maintain a constant fight inside the human conscience." Hocico epitomizes dark electro.

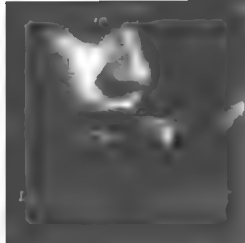
Hocico, pronounced "Osziko," continue their assault on the industrial music scene with their latest release *Signos de Aberracion*, an aggressive collection of hard line dance tracks, with a few soft spots mixed in between. One of those soft spots is the opening song; "Pandemonium," which features a piano lead accompanied by synthetic orchestration. The majority of the album is classic Hocico: distorted vocals, frantic sequences, and heavy beats.

"Bloodshed" may be one of the best offerings from *Signos de Aberracion*, but "Instincts of Perversion" and "Wounds" are in close contention.

The artwork for *Signos de Aberracion* is as provocative as the music. Looking closely at the CD booklet, one can make out what appears to be a torn and tattered lazy boy reclining chair, a Mexican statuette, and what is likely the ruins of Mexico City past. Turning the pages, one also finds their emblematic spider, more ruins, song lyrics, and a dedication in español, which won't be butchered here in an attempt to translate, but it is encouraged that you yourself make the effort to decipher it.

With *Signos de Aberracion*, Hocico confirm their spot as one of the best dark electro bands south of the boarder, and perhaps the rest of the world. [Jon VanWieren]

The Hungry Ghost
The Hungry Ghost

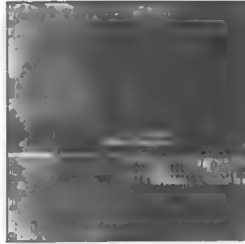


Contact:
WHIMusic
P.O. Box 20292
Ferndale, MI 48220
U S

As I was looking over the cover letter for the Hungry Ghosts' new self-titled album, my Grandmother came in to talk to me. She inquired what I was doing, and I told her. She asked to see the letter, and after her perusal of it, her comment sums up exactly how I felt about the letter as well. "Who would be so full of themselves to write a cover letter like this?" I am quite certain she was referring to the comment "For maximum effect, listen to this with the lights out..." at the end of the letter.

The press release (which 'The Ghost' was so kind to include) calls the album "a bizarre blend of dark-wave, trip-hop and traditional eastern instruments." If you like "Gothic-Trip-Hop" then this is definitely the album for you. Personally, I found *The Hungry Ghost* to be positively dull. The vocals are bland, and the Ghost sounds a little on the tone-deaf side. The music is slow-paced and unoriginal. You know that hippie down on the corner, plucking out that annoying twang on his acoustic guitar and begging for change? That annoying twang can be found on the songs "Heaven is a Dark Place," "Haunted" and "Frightened." The press release called it "bluesy guitar hook." The lyrics are cheesy, with "X Files inspired odes," vampires, angels wearing black, perpetual night, and even "an old-fashioned protest song." I would rather listen to a mangy hamster on valium attempting to run on it's rusted wheel, but flopping out miserably, then listen to *The Hungry Ghost* again. [MalignantFemale]

I Burn vs. Sshe
Retina Stimulants
Subfried Traffic
Perfection



Contact:
Horchl c/o Ars Macabre
Waldemarstrasse 7
18057 Rostock
Germany

Any fan of brooding experimental music should find this disc by any means necessary. This collaboration between two Italian noise artists is nothing short of phenomenal. Each of the ten tracks featured

here began as the same set of samples and basic loops, but the treatment and reassembly of the basic parts is completely different for each track. The slow, almost melancholy tempo remains consistent throughout the disc. It could easily become the background music for summoning demons, plotting world domination, or any other thing the dark side of the heart desires. [Brian Clarkson]

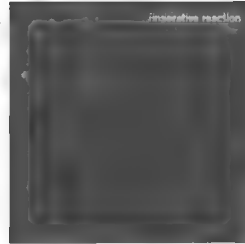
Icon of Coil
The Soul is in the
Software



Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

Icon of Coil first made their mark on the dance floors of Europe with the song "Shallow Nation" and the release "One Nation Under Beat." They followed this up with the magnificent album *Serenity is the Devil*, their first effort to be domestically released. Since then, they have chopped up, ripped apart and mixed up many other fine artists in the electro underground. Now, the dynamic trio of Andy LaPlegua, Sebastian Komor and Christian Lund have released yet another album, nearly two years after *Serenity*, to much anticipation. The instrumentation of Icon of Coil has always been top-notch and this is best exemplified by some of their remixes including Stromkern's "Perfect Sunrise" and VNV Nation's "Genesis." However, Andy's voice can leave much to be desired. At times on the album, the vocals can get very monotonous and the very emotional intensity of their live shows is not fully translated through the recording. The actual lyrics also tend to be fairly weak with notable exceptions being "Simulate" and "Everything is Real?" For the last album, Icon had guest vocals provided by Benedicte Sveinsson, but she does not lend her support on this album. So, for those of you who had your fingers crossed on the female vocals, you will be let down. The best songs include the more club-friendly tracks like "Access and Amplify" and "Simulate" and the more subdued, dark "In Absence." Overall, this is a decent album and those who liked *Serenity* will probably like this one. [Nick Garland]

Imperative Reaction
Ruined

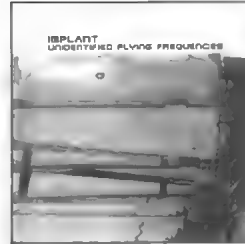


Contact:
Metropolis
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Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

After three years since their last album, *Eulogy for the Sick Child*, considered a breakthrough release by most critics, Imperative Reaction are back with their sophomore follow-up. Notable changes on this album include the addition of Jason DM and Sam P. of Pulse Legion for programming and more crisp, clear musical and vocal stylings. *Ruined* will fall short for those who were looking for a 15-track opus because the album only contains 10 new songs (well nine really, if you subtract "Rift," which was on an earlier compilation). Also, three of the songs do not include vocals, which could have made them slightly more tolerable, since they are minimalistic cliché throw-

backs to the early 1990s. Lyrically, *Ruined* seems like all the other pop albums out on the market with its direct and uninspiring lyrics that lack much symbolism, let alone creativity. However, for what is absent lyrically, Imperative Reaction make up with the vocals, which are certainly the highlight of the album. It is fairly well-balanced with such tracks as the downtempo "Disoriented," with melancholy vocals provided by Lisbeth Boada and the dance-floor-smashing "Fault" that showcases the power and intensity of Ted Phelps' voice. For the hardcore industrialists out there, this is a must have CD. Besides, as Phelps says in "Fault," "but what does it matter when there's nothing left to lose?" [Nick Garland]

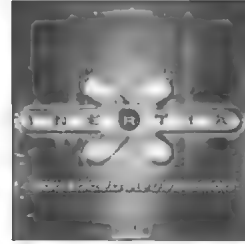
Implant
U.F.F.



Contact:
Flatline Records
P.O. Box 11
84088 Neufahrn
Germany

An extremely trancey feel saturates every track on the first of this two-disc album. *Unidentified Flying Frequencies* is continuously upbeat, but in no way aggressive, and thankfully short. When I played the first track, "Log on/Log off" I was intrigued - lots of bleeps and thrumming percussion, like a futuristic sci-fi movie or video game soundtrack. There were sci-fi movie samples, as well, to add to the cosmic feel, including the unavoidable Event Horizon samples (Though, to Implant's credit, they were not the most recognizable quotes.) Yet, after track one, it felt as though I was hearing the same song over and over again. It wasn't a bad song, but it wasn't that great, either. I perked up a bit on "Flash," a fast-paced piece of EBM, but found the "Frequency" interludes either silly or repetitive. The second disc, despite being entirely remixed by other artists, was more of the same, so much in fact that I at first thought my CD changer was broken. This is a bad sign - no song on *U.F.F.* left an impression. There were admirable remixes, most notably from the newly-signed-to-Flatline Spies, playing up a more tribal rhythm, Razed in Black and Ammo. [Theresa]

Inertia
Advanced Revelation

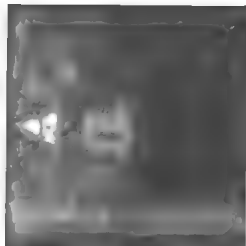


Contact:
Cryonica Music
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London, E13 9QN
U.K

The British duo, Reza Udhin and Alexys B, are back with the follow-up to their lukewarm EP *Positive Angel*. Inertia's sound has now evolved into a power-packed, well orchestrated body of crisp, clear and highly danceable songs. Label mate Romell Regulacion form the Hawaiian industrial rock band Razed in Black joins them with is guitar solos on the tracks "Gravity" and "Victims." Surprisingly, the guitars work extremely well with the pounding industrial beats and these two songs mark some of the high points of the album. The single "No Defect," although it is one of the most radio-friendly of the tracks, is not necessarily the best song. "Gravity," "Void,"

"Porno Girl," "Obsession" and "Fly" are all extremely well-crafted tracks which could easily support singles or even EPs. "Fly" is a Traci Lords cover which shows off Alexys' superb vocal stylings. The vocal effects used throughout the album, although reminiscent of Cher's "Believe" and at times a bit monotonous, add some variety to the lyrics and are in general carried out very well. For those who like pounding industrial bass, and aggressive male and melodic female vocals, this album should be on your list. [Nick Garland]

Informatik Nymphomatik



Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

David Din of Din_fiv and Tyler Newman of Battery Cage combine their electro skills on the latest effort from the Boston-based band, Informatik's first album in four years. Highly danceable electro-synth reminiscent of latter-day Evil's Toy (Toy? T.O.Y.? Whatever they're named this month), that is also a pleasure to just sit back and listen to. Like a more contemporary *Pretty Hate Machine*, these are love songs for the lovelorn. But thankfully, Din's croon is never whiny and his lyrics manage to avoid clichés, even though there's only so much new to say about bad breakups. Towards the end of the album, the tone reveals some hope for future relationships and even shows a lighter side on "Built For Pleasure," an upbeat song about a sexpot. At least I hope it wasn't meant to be taken seriously. Also of note is the sexy, buzzing Negative Format remix of "Perfect Stranger." Hopefully, Informatik won't make us wait so long for another new album. [Theresa]

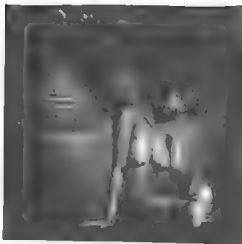
In Strict Confidence Herzattacke



Contact:
WTII Records
P.O. Box 13495
Chicago, IL 60613
U.S.

After many years of absence in the United States, German elektro pioneers In Strict Confidence finally found their home at the American label WTII. The "Herzattacke" single is the first from the upcoming album *Mistrust the Angels*. It contains the single and extended versions; remixes by Olaf Wollschläger, Clan of Xymox and Front Line Assembly, as well as three new songs. "Herzattacke" is an upbeat, lively and aggressive song in German with catchy synth lines and gruff vocals provided by lead singer Dennis Ostermann. All of the remixes at times seem a bit too similar to the original, but because the original is so good, you may not notice that deficiency. The ambient intro of "Into Ashes" with door swinging effects, crashing sounds and a screaming woman lead into a relatively fast-paced ballad in English with interesting synth loops and pounding bass. This is most assuredly a great teaser to their soon-to-be-released album due out in September on Metropolis. [Nick Garland]

In Strict Confidence Mistrust The Angels



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Germany

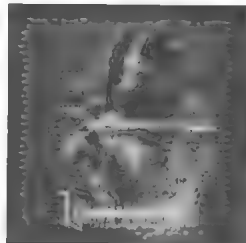
One of the last great bands to come off of the late Zoth Ommog label, In Strict Confidence has a lot in common with its former labelmates, especially X Marks the Pedwalk. Dennis Ostermann's vocals are warm and expressive, alternating between distorted growls and a rich croon, adding a humble, human touch to the slick electro-work. A haunting album from the onset, *Mistrust the Angels* provides gentle and abrasive rhythms, some geared towards the dancefloor- "Herzattacke" and its seeming companion piece "Lost in the Night" - and others sustain the despairing mood, as the instrumental "Schlect Geträumt" and the sultry "When the Heart Starts to Bleed" do. The French and German songs, sometimes coupled with the lilting voice of Nadine Stelzer, give the album an operatic feel, especially on the sultry "Der Vampir und Dessen Verwandlung." Built around the classic imagery of fallen angels, broken hearts, and shadow, in strict confidence delivers something dark and beautiful with this latest release. Their technical ability has matured, too, and is at its most original on the slower tracks. Fans of L'ame Immortelle and like-minded bands will not be disappointed with what should be considered one of the top releases of 2002. [Theresa]

In Strict Confidence The Truth Inside of Me

Contact:
Minuswelt
Postfach 1246
64745 Breuberg
Germany

This is a very limited edition single (1,500 copies worldwide) definitely worth picking up, whether you're already a fan of the German trio or looking for a good introduction to their music. This tidy package includes the mini-disc, a lyric booklet featuring unearthly, beautiful photographs of the band, and two little stickers. "The Truth Inside of Me" is a powerful and melodic song off of Love Kills! with crisp electro-work, showcased best on the tight, appropriately named "controlled fusion remix." Yes it's true: good things do come in small packages. [Theresa]

Iszoloscope Coagulating Wreckage



Contact:
Spectre Records
P.O. Box 88
2020 Antwerpen 2
Belgium

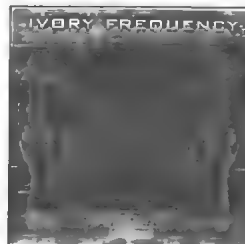
Iszoloscope is conceived as an "audio portrait of the effects of isolation on judgment, mental health, interpersonal values and anger on a human being." A stark instrumental cyberscape like A Split Second sans guitar riffs, choruses and bonus beats. The

Iszoloscope project started in 1999 but in 2001, partner François Bénard left. Continuing alone, Yann Faussurier has realized his concept with an influential label. With some help from Herman of Ah Cama-Sotz, Iszo came into the Spectre stable.

Coagulating Wreckage starts with pulsating sweeps in the title track aligned with hollow sounds. As we continue on the full length disc, a few samples dropped in during quieter moments as things build to aggro harsher beats. "Deimos II" ends in shrieks of terror. The industrial clanging hammer repeats in "Crimson Road." The structure of this disc is covered by a layer of bubbly fluid static throughout. Think scratching the surface trying to escape.

This project could use a sweeter bottom end but I think it would then lose it's edge. It would be interesting to hear these noisescapes on vinyl. It's easy to recommend *Coagulating Wreckage* to the noise crowd. It's not too broken to enjoy. With the backing of Belgian label Spectre, you'll soon hear new material from Iszo soon. [D] Bitter]

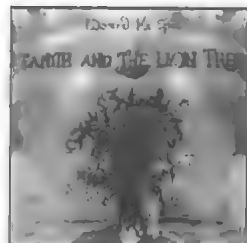
Ivory Frequency Plug In



Contact:
Dependent
P.O. Box 200 631
45841 Gelsenkirchen
Germany

This disc is Ivory Frequency's debut release, and it seems to be a good preview of things to come from this synthpop/futurepop band. All the electro (or is it elektro?) elements one would expect from a synthpop band are in here: strong keyboard and synthesizer work, catchy beats, and distorted vocals. There is a strange sense of humor evident in the disc as well. The most danceable tunes on the disc are "Dancing Troops" and "Today"; both are catchy, beat-heavy-but-not-quite-EBM tracks with excellent keyboard work almost reminiscent of some early rave music, or perhaps reminiscent of VNV Nation's "instrumental" pieces. It's difficult to highlight just one or two tracks, because they're all excellent. [Brian Clarkson]

Edward Ka-Spel Tanith and the Lion Tree



Contact:
Flesh Eating Ants Records
1672 Earle Street
Victoria, British Columbia
V8S 1N5
Canada

This double vinyl disk set covers work from the middle of Ka-Spel's solo career that was released in 1991. It was Ka-Spel's aim to have his collection released on vinyl. This never happened originally as the record company (Roadrunner Records/Third Mind Records) declined on a vinyl release as they saw no future for the music product format back when CD's were bringing in more profits. The story of this re-release starts with *Tanith And The Lion Tree* being a favorite of upstart Flesh Eating Ants Records exec Brad. He enjoyed the CD so much he went further to help realize it to its intended vinyl format. The sheer weight of this platter is awesome at 220g and gray in colour. Extra points for the direct metal mastering and manufacturing quality of this double

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set. It's limited to 512 hand numbered copies.

The original album has been remastered and mildly reworked by Ka-Spel himself to better suit the vinyl format. Included are the original CD bonus tracks "Phoney War" and "Old Man Trouble" that were recorded when the USAs Gulf War was raging in the early 1990's. Exclusive material on disk 2 are recordings done by Ka-Spel on September 11, 12 and 13, 2001. Seems fitting to have these 5 songs together with similar inspiration after 10 years. Diary (11th to 13th) seem to have no beginning or end as you'll find the mellifluous platter spinning quietly to realize it's over. The slow waves and fades feel magical yet somber in mood. Whether it be for fan, collectors, vinyl junkies or first time explorists, *Tanith and the Lion Tree* can be enjoyed for many reasons. This instant collectable limited set can only be bought direct from their website at flesheatingants.com at this time via mail order. [D] Bitter]

cEvin Key The Ghost of Each Room



Contact:
Subconscious Studios
10061 Riverside Drive #759
Toluca Lake, CA 91602
U.S.

A very polarized situation in deciding whether *Ghost of Each Room* is better than *Download's Furnace* or *Eyes of Stanley Pain* as Key's best post Skinny Puppy material. This is the second in the Metropolis solo trilogy by cEvin Key. While Key is only solo on tracks "Aphasia," "Klora" and "cccc," he's able to use some old and new friends on this collection. Collaborators include Frankie "Pet" Verschuuren, Edward Ka-Spel, Phil Western, Omar

Torres, Bill Van Rooy, Justin Bennett, Kent Clelland, Saki Kaskas, Martyn deKleer, Silverman, Ryan Moore and K.Tokoi with Skinny Puppy front man Ogre and Ken "Hiwatt" Marshall on "Frozen Sky."

Recorded in California, Jamaica and Holland, this collection has broken samples and Jamaican rhythms with electronic song structures and smatterings of Dub effect. The material continues to draw from Key's experiences at Jamaica's Haunted Rose Hal I. The artwork is derived from his stay at the mansion. This is the reason for the eerie Duppy feel. The sound stylings of cEvin Key's vision of music won't make typical radio play but works on the brain and soul of the listener at the same time.

These tracks meld better than the earlier "Music of Cats" offering. Track "Tatayama" was originally released as Unknown from M.E. (remix) from the SEGA Sonic Adventure Remix CD with K.Tokoi. Standouts include "cccc," "Aphasia" and the experimental "A Certain Stuuckey" on the mostly instrumental tracklist. Long time icon and collaborator Edward Ka-Spel lends himself to tracks "15th Shade" and "A Certain Stuuckey." Much to the delight of fans, one day vocalist Ogre and Ken Marshall were in the studio with Key to record "Frozen Sky." The beginning of "Frozen Sky" builds up from the period of turmoil prior to Key & Ogre working again. Once it gets going, we see the chemistry still exists and Ogre's vocal style has matured. This track has the making of a single and if the record company realized this would have produced a video for it. "Frozen Sky" was the encore during OhGr's U.S. 2001 tour that Key par-took in. A bit of humour is thrown in on track Klora's sampling.

This release is proof that Key is not resting on his laurels. It's easy to leave it on replay. [D] Bitter]

KMFDM Attak



Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

My first thought after listening to *Attak* was "Let's go break something." Not that I wouldn't want to anyway. Musically, the year 2002 could really use an attak anyway. It could stand to be torn a new asshole. But that's a matter of personal taste. Anyway, this album displays impeccable and superior production skills as usual or at least since the last seven years KMFDM has been rocking my world. There is a lot going on here all at once yet it is not too busy or experimental or messy. *Attak* is quite the healthy work out. Vocals from Dorona and Raymond are in full effect. Deep, heart felt and perverted. *Attak* breaks it down with damn intelligent advice to listeners. "If it feels this good then it can't be wrong," claims the lyrics to "Risen."

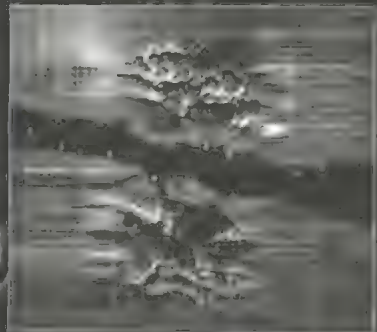
"Superhero" is positively flawless and I would kill for it on vinyl. Every time I hear it, I simply can't get over how much it rules. Imagine KMFDM + drum 'n' bass + kick ass chick vocals. The lyrics are smart ass and cynical in the best way ever.

"Save Me" sounds like an industrial version of Winger according to my best friend during a road trip while cranking the power ballad. A hilarious comparison if anything but nothing more. However, I won't deny that this would be a track to bust your lighter out to at a show. As rebels for any causes, we can probably all relate to this. We can all understand "You don't understand."

Attak closes with "Sleep" demanding "Do as I say

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and never question what I do." A wonderful sound-track to angry thoughts, murder plots and crime scenes. Perfect combative electronic music to rock out with your cock out to. I'm dead serious. You should try it. Really. [DJ Mama C]

Kompressor Crush Television



Contact:
Kompressor Music
P.O. BOX 19218
Cincinnati, OH 45219
U.S.

After listening to this release over and over and over again, I have come to this conclusion: Kompressor, is to EBM what "Weird" Al Yanchovich is to pop music. Quite hilarious!! Kompressor (whose alter ego is this mentally divergent German freak who lives in Ohio and goes by the name of Andreas K) is quite possibly one of the funniest geniuses to hit the EBM scene in a long time. *Crush Television* is remarkably funny and the music on it is pretty good too. You can tell he has tons of free time on his hands (and these days, with this economy, who doesn't?!). And what he does with that time is simply amazing. I first heard Kompressor a little over a year and a half ago, with the classic underground, wannabe EBM/Rap hit "Kompressor Does Not Dance." I have been a devout fan of his wacky shenanigans that assault electronic music ever since. The music and beats are quite simplistic (almost as if he were playing it on a Fischer-Price "My First EBM Kit" or something), even a little bit on the kitschy side. But what

for were his cover of "The Girl From Impanema" (which was absolutely horrendous, to say the least) and the last track "If I Was a Rabbit." You'd think, given my name, that I'd enjoy a song praising rabbit's, but think again. The lyrics made less sense than anything else on the album. "If I was a rabbit/I would roll." What's that all about? You tell me, because Kompressor has me stumped! But when it all comes down to brass tacks, for whatever it's worth, I highly recommend it for all you lovers of kitsch out there. It's quite refreshing to hear an EBM artist making fun of EBM. And for all you DJs out there, the CD makes for not only for good, simplistic EBM but also for its sheer comedic value. [Rabbit von Hasenpfucker, Esq.]

Ladytron Light & Magic



Contact:
Emperor Norton
102 Robinson Street
Los Angeles CA 90026
U.S.

At their humble beginnings, bands like Kraftwerk, Gary Numan & John Foxx took a lot of criticism for their music lacking soul. The synthesizer is by it's very nature, a cold sound. Compare a bassline from a James Brown song with a Korg keyboard solo, and the keyboard sounds clinical and artificial... especially if it's preprogrammed. Your typical mood solo won't express happiness without coming off as completely goofy. The loneliness in Kraftwerk's "Computer Love" sounds much more sincere, than their goofily happy "Electric Cafe." The

sound of the synthesizer lends itself to colder, darker feelings of isolation and desperation. Ladytron understands this. That's why they're motherfucking amazing.

Ladytron are an unapologetic retro-80s pop band; no guitars or live drums, just 4 people behind keyboards. Their first album, *604*, sometimes made the mistake of emulating the 80's progenitors a little too closely. It even went so far as to lift the melody of Kraftwerk's "The Model" almost note-for-note. *Light and Magic* is a much more polished effort, emulating not the technical aspects of Numan et al., but the FEELINGS behind it. Choruses in Ladytron songs are often questions that suggest loneliness: "Lights are on, is there somebody home?" "Does this mean you don't trust me anymore?" There's a keen eye for detail in Ladytron lyrics that borders on the fetishistic. Details like a cracked LCD watch or a dusty Atari VCS cartridge are brought up not for some 80's kitsch nostalgia, but because they describe the fucked up person wearing the watch. Ladytron flirt with camp, but don't cross the line into being a self-parody.

This is a fantastic pop record. It's a desperate, lonely and honest sort of pop music that is complimented well by the fast beats & dominant keyboards. Englishwoman Helen Mannie varies her vocals from echo angelics to flat monotone delivery. Mira Aroyo adds her own monotones, often in her native Bulgarian to fantastic results. This is the best pop record you'll buy all year. And you can dance to it too. [Rick Kinney]

Landscape Body Machine Revolution



Contact:
Interdimensional Industries
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RPO Connaught
Calgary, Alberta T2S 2B1
Canada

This is really a single for "Revolution," the title track, plus 3 b-sides, 2 of which are awesome (in my opinion). This so-called EP is reminiscent of the first Landscape Body Machine album, but is overall a bit more dancefloor friendly. In general, the LBM tracks have very heavy beats with strong techno-influenced melodies over the top, and generally few vocals. One of these awesome B-sides, "Lunar Informant," is actually a departure from the rest of the disc, being quite ambient, but it is also very nice. "Last of the Species," track 2, is my favorite track on the disc not only for its outstanding melody and beats, but also for the presence of a Dr. David Suzuki and his sampled lecture on environmentalism. He's not saying anything especially new, although he puts things in a nice way, but I guess I just really like the way it was used. It makes a great track even more special. It's awesome for the dancefloor, but also sublime.

As usual on singles, the original is pretty much the best mix - the Consume mix is the only one that I liked better than the original. In fact, this remix was significantly better, even though I liked the original. He made the track extremely beat heavy, but kept the melody element strong as well, and added typically (for Consume) funny samples that also add to the music. I found the other remixes anywhere between mildly to quite interesting, and generally they showcased significant elements from the remixers. Besides Consume's, I especially enjoyed the remixes by Klaxxon and Firebomb. Firebomb took the track and made it almost completely beat-orient-

ed, with a great female vox taking the lead, much like in S.I.N.A. or Psycho Bitch. I need to keep an eye on Firebomb's future work, thanks to this mix! Likewise, Klaxxon took the track in a sort of power noise direction, keeping some of the quirkiness as well. Figital's remix was truly bizarre, taking the track in a weird lounge-lizard-like direction, but I couldn't follow, sorry. Moev and Adri took it in more ambient dance directions, with good results. Prometheus also has an interesting mix, which is still growing on me. [Sarin]

L'Usine Ici Coalition 2000



Contact:
U-Cover
Karel Geertsstraat 33-3
2140 Borgerhout
Belgium

Chances are, by the time you read this review, L'Usine's *Coalition 2000* will be out of print. This release, born out of two nights of live sound arrangements, was limited to 875 copies. But *Coalition 2000* is well worth tracking down, if you are looking for laid-back IDM often growing out of one solitary sound and progressing into an entire orchestra of disembodied glitches and beeps. L'Usine Ici's releases read like a who's who of IDM labels. Isophlux, Carpark, Tigerbeat6, Mad Monkey, and more recently, Hymen have all released material by Southern California sonic technician Jeff McIlwain. It's no accident that McIlwain's popularity is rising: he creates tracks that play like an ambient soundscape of surgical precision, with an effervescent moodiness that sulks above the sonic collage, and occasionally dips down to pounce. If you could convert the feel of a desolate night in the middle of a deserted city to music, it would be L'Usine Ici's *Coalition 2000*. All cities should have a soundtrack like this. [Kyrontive]

Lustmord Zoetrope: The Original Soundtrack, Expanded & Revised



Contact:
Nextera
Ras'inoVo Nabr'ez'i 76
120 00 Praha 2
Czech Republic

A good 'ambient' work should propel the listener somewhere other than the immediate present. Usually, the goal of such a work is to provide a backdrop or soundtrack for other activities. Such a work should open up some new space, some new realm of possibility that was not necessarily imagined before. This work accomplishes that task. Quite simply, *Zoetrope* creates an almost tangibly emotional space of inquiry, of exploration, of pain, and of discovery. Part of that accomplishment is probably directly related to the fact that this soundtrack accompanies a modern film version of 'In the Penal Colony' (a Franz Kafka short story, and a brilliant one at that). That knowledge does make the transportation of the listener a bit easier - but only by providing a starting point. The release stands on its own; it doesn't simply serve as a mnemonic cue for recalling scenes from the movie. [Brian Clarkson]

Massiv in Mensch Die Rein



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M2R 3K1
Canada

Massiv in Mensch, a trio comprised of Daniel Logemann, Mirco Osterthun and Sarah Folkens, hail from Germany and punctuate a long legacy of electro pioneers. Their debut album, *Belastendes Material*, caused a veritable hailstorm of rave reviews and, as expected, great anticipation for their sophomore North American release. So, the German "techno-meisters" follow up with the power-packed and four-on-the-floor *Die Rein*, full of catchy musical hooks and mean bass lines sure to cause a preemptive strike of the dance floor. The most notable change in this album is the lack of Sarah's vocals, which were definitely one of the most pleasing aspects of their debut and obviously helped make "Offensivshock" one of the top picks of that album. Although this album at times gets a bit overly redundant with its programming, most of the songs are so well-crafted that one cannot help but listen to them again and again. Only seven songs on the album are truly new, two are remixes and one is a continuation of a remix Massiv in Mensch did for Psyche. It has a slight early 90's feel to it, perhaps because of the production, but also possibly due to the experimental nature of the dark, beat-heavy songs. This will be a nice change of pace for those interested in club-friendly techno. However, for those who liked their debut album, you may have to wait for their third release to get your fix, which supposedly will again feature the vocal stylings that undoubtedly made their debut so popular. [Nick Garland]

Melotron Gib Mir Alles CDS



Contact:
Synthetic Symphony
P.O. Box 72 1147
30531 Hanover
Germany

Ah, the new breed of synthpop. Since all the lyrics are in German I can't determine just how deep the band is, how evocative the songwriting is. But, each of the four tracks on this CD single are solid danceable slices of synths, drum machines, and vocals. It's a small disc, and it's not all that bad. But there's nothing outstanding about it either. Ok - there is one thing outstanding about it: the front cover. [Brian Clarkson]

Merzbow Ikebukuro Dada



Contact:
Circumvent Recordings
P.O. Box 28012
Austin, TX 78755
U.S.

The master of noise has put out yet another slab of sonic experimentation. This one isn't designed to

assault the ears. Seems that Merzbow is starting to mellow a bit with age. The same rumblings, feedback loops, zoomings and whooshing that one would expect from a Merzbow disc are all here. *Ikebukuro Dada* almost reminds me of the collaboration Merzbow did with Christoph Heeman or the Music for Bondage Performance offerings. This piece is rather ambient, rather dreamy I find, and works well as the backdrop for an evening's quiet activities. [Brian Clarkson]

Merzbow Maschinenstil



Contact:
dualpLOVER
P.O. Box 983
Darlinghurst NSW 1500
Australia

Merzbow. Few bands are known as this for putting out a unique, distinct sound, and sticking to it, so that the name becomes like a brand... one automatically knows what to expect when one buys a Merzbow album. This said, you, the reader, already know what you will think of this album. If you do not care much for harsh unending noise sculptures, this will hurt your ears as much as anything else in the band's discography. For those who like experimental noise, however, expect a treat. Adding loops, odd psychedelic drones, recognizable percussion, and a new variety of interesting distortion effects to his well honed and well done as always maelstrom of continuously evolving screeches and static roars. This album seems slightly more accessible than previous efforts, while still retaining the harsh and avant garde edge which Mr Masami Akita is loved and loathed for. This gives the distinct impression of being just as caustic and harsh as anything else among Merzbow's best releases, but adds even more interesting diversity and new sonic torture techniques to the band's arsenal. All in all, this makes for a bleak and beautiful sonic assault, to stay in any noisehead's cd player for a long time. [Robert Bisno]

The Mission Aura



Contact:
Metropolis
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Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

Upon first listen of The Mission's latest *Aura*, what struck me first was how god awful and ridiculous the lyrics were. Let me give you a sample from the first track "Evangeline"; "Evangeline, Evangeline, kiss the spike of her Louis XV. Evangeline, Evangeline, bow down and worship the whiplash queen." And if that doesn't sound so bad in writing, imagine an uninspired and whining voice on top of it, and you might get an idea of what I'm talking about.

On a brighter note, the guitar leads and lines are quite inventive and rather rocking, but this is the only highlight of this release, the drums are the standard rock thumping. And on track six, "Dragonfly," I could have sworn I heard Bono, but I didn't see his name in the credits.

Forget whatever success these guys may have had with past work and other projects in the past

(Sisters of Mercy), the frivolous and trite nature of this collection of lyrics make *Aura* simply unbearable and pure cliché. The Playground Recordings Collector's Limited Edition offers a bonus CD and some multimedia video clips which might be nice for fans, and the packaging is gorgeous. It's just too bad it has to encase such a crap pile of music. [Jon VanWieren]

Mlada Fronta Oxydes + Remixes



Contact:
Parametric
9 Rue Du Palais De Justice
06130 Grasse
France

Sometimes while knee-deep in the 'industrial/experimental/ambient/noise' listening experience I get the distinct feeling that I'm not really hearing 'songs'. The tracks may be named and listed like 'songs', but they're not really 'songs' in the sense that the word 'song' implies some sort of planning or structure on the part of the artist. In fact, it seems like most of the time what I'm really hearing are the best trimmed out sections of time from endless studio jams that contain nothing else anyone would want to hear.

Mlada Fronta's *Oxydes* is the exact opposite of this. At first glance *Oxydes* looks pretty much like a compilation of crap from Mlada's secret basement tapes, but one listen will change your mind. This album was not only carefully preconceived, but executed in a way that paints a very specific sonic picture for the listener. On each track Remy Pelleschi (the single human force behind Mlada Fronta) builds a thick nest of feedback, floaty pads, white noise, ghostly voices, and spacecraft sounds (yes, I mean ACTUAL spacecraft/hovercraft sci-fi fx here!) before blowing your speakers the fuck up with some of the loudest, most distorted breakbeats to be heard on the planet. Seriously, these beats get so fuzzy they pretty much cease to be drum sounds and end up being just little snippets of noise. My favorite tracks are "Uo" and "H2o," the latter of which misleads you with about 3:30 of spooky background sounds before dropping the heavy, HEAVY shit right on top of your head.

Oxydes is awesome and considering that this CD is actually a sick two-disc set with remixes and 4 videos it makes for a pretty good purchase for my money. [SetH]

Mnemonic Identifikationsstörung



Contact:
Alfa Matrix
90 Rue Charles Degroux
1040 Brussels
Belgium

According to Babelfish, German duo Mnemonic's debut album, titled *Identifikationsstörung*, roughly translates to "identification disturbance." This is a somewhat fitting description for Mnemonic, as *Identifikationsstörung* plays like members Sebastian Schulz and Michael Belletz couldn't decide whether they wanted to make an impressively sequenced EBM record or an aggressive ambient disc. What's

interesting about *Identifikationsstörung* is the fact that Mnemonic manages to do both without sounding schizophrenic. *Identifikationsstörung* starts out with a few Evil's Toy-esque EBM cuts that soon mutate into distorted breakbeat-laden tracks overlaid with lush, atmospheric melodies. Throughout the course of *Identifikationsstörung* Mnemonic frequently shifts between the two styles, yet does it so seamlessly that it hardly seems like they've stylistically switched gears. Remixes from Somatic Responses, Ammo, and Implant round out this release. The limited edition boxset also includes additional tracks, demo versions, and further remixes from God Module and Razed in Black, well worth the additional \$7 (postage paid!) if your are ordering it direct from Alfa Matrix. Recommended. [Kyronfive]

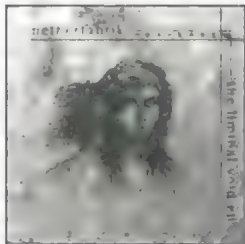
Monolith Labyrinth



Contact:
Daft Records
P.O. Box 46
9120 Beveren
Belgium

Eric van Wonterghem has been making music since the early 80's, when he was a member of Absolute Body Control. Later on he also joined Insekt and founded Sonar with Dirk Ivens of Dive/Klinik fame. This release is Monolith's fourth offering and shows the efforts of a musician who knows his shit. Alternating between unrelenting rhythms and desolate soundscapes, the album is an innovative combination of drum n'noise. Vocals are very sparse and distant, sometimes with a hint of Middle Eastern flair as on "Eternity" and the bonus (though why it is listed separately from the other songs is unclear) track "Disco Buddha," tinging the album with a tribal feel. The centerpiece of the album is "Memories of Sound," a two-part piece starting off with a creepy mechanical pulse that bleeds seamlessly into driving clangs and piston hisses. All in all, as the album comes to a close, it feels as if it has come full circle, a well-crafted, moody journey worth taking for those who appreciate their infectious beats blended with thought-provoking atmospherics. [Theresa]

Netherfabrik The Liminal Void

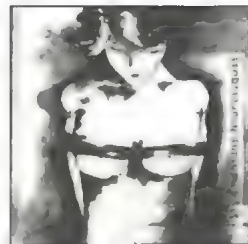


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Milwaukee, WI 53502
U.S.

This is probably my favorite demo of the year! If the guys keep this quality up, they have to go far! Track 1 is an intro track, bringing you up gently from silence into an uplifting piece of beauty, and it gets the CD off to a wonderful start. But then he must know just how great it sounds, and has to screw with you, and just kills the track midway with a solid 5-second tone. It works brilliantly, jarringly reminds you we're not here to hear beautiful soundscapes, no matter how good they are. It says let's start the dance tracks, and it works great! Track 2 is a great EBM dance track ala FLA Hard Wired, but a little catchier. Track 3 is basically D-Ranged (early Paracont) meets Outremer (early VNV). One of my

favorite tracks! Track 4 has some of that, but with more of trance feel to it, plus a sweet technoid element thrown in. My other favorite track! I've had tracks 3 & 4 on repeat most of the night! Track 5 is a bit strange, but that's part of what makes it very cool. At times it feels just like Orbital, sometimes a little more aggressive, but then the vocals sound straight out of Death In June?! Anyway, it's a neat track, too, often very catchy as well! [Sarin]

Neuroticfish Les Chansons Neurotiques



Contact:
Dancing Ferret
4906 Monument Road
Philadelphia, PA 19131
U.S.

Germany's Sascha Mario Klein is the mastermind behind Neuroticfish; a band name likely to grow on EBM fans worldwide following the release of *Les Chansons Neurotiques*. Neuroticfish has been active since first spawning in 1999, but it is *Les Chansons Neurotiques* that has jettisoned this fish out of water. The depth and quality of this release has Neuroticfish swimming in the same tank as genre leaders such as Apoptygma Berzerk, Mesh, Covenant, and Icon of Coil.

The songs from *Les Chansons Neurotiques* have in common emotive melodies and Sascha's powerful voice. Intimate in nature, this album takes a more personal approach than say bands like Haujobb, VNV Nation, or Front Line Assembly who have a more epic style. Other than perhaps "Reinvent the Pain," there aren't really any songs that stand out. The songs of this release are similar in form and content, which would be a knock on the band if the songs weren't all so good! A provocative sample stating: "EBM is dead" is said to be found on all Neuroticfish albums, as it is here. The irony being that strong releases like *Les Chansons Neurotiques* will only keep EBM alive, and far from the assistance of any life support systems.

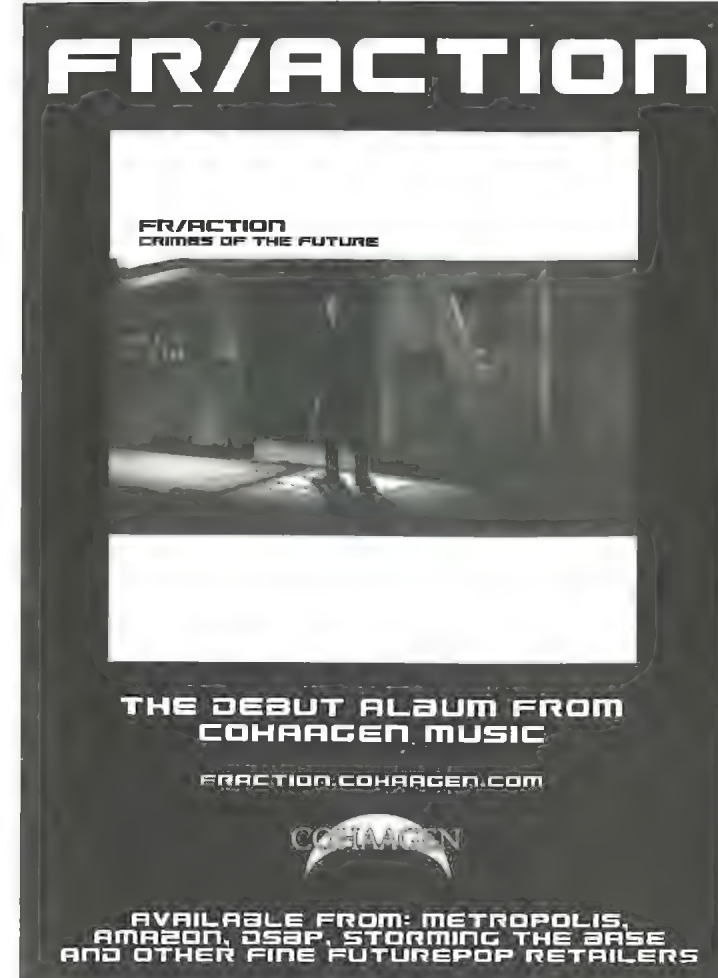
Orientated toward the dance floor, this album is certain to shake your tail fin. Arguably, this release fits well within the 'future pop' category. But don't let Mr. Klein here you say that, he hates the label, stating in a recent interview: "I am NOT a future pop band." Well, however you slice it, this Neuroticfish is a keeper! [Jon VanWieren]

Neuroticfish Prostitute



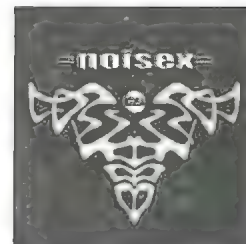
Contact:
Strange Ways Records
Grosse Johannistr. 5
20457 Hamburg, FRG
Germany

Another catchy single from the band that packed dancefloors with the club-hit "Velocity." Sascha Mario Klein has a smooth vocal style that complements the EBM-influenced beats and synth overtures. Not too sweet, not too aggressive, but the best of both synthpop and EBM, particularly on the "NYC Club Edit" version which has been in heavy rotation in the Northeast. Chances are, post-listening, you will find yourself humming these infectious melodies at random. It's hard to forget a name like Neuroticfish, and with their second eagerly-awaited



album just released, you're sure to be hearing that name a lot more often in the future. It's well-earned attention. [Theresa]

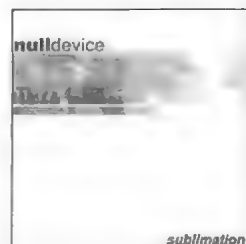
Noisex Groupieshock



Contact:
Flatline Records
P.O. Box 11
84088 Neufahrn
Germany

Groupieshock is everything a listener has come to expect from the Noisex camp. Inorganic, distorted beats, simple loops, aggression: all the elements of powernoise are found here. Standout tracks are the title track "Groupieshock," "Faster," "Industrial Drummer" and "Boys With Toys." The opening Dr. Evil (of Austin Powers fame) on "Industrial Drummer" is hilarious, as are some of the samples riddled through "Boys With Toys." There are some mellower tracks on the disc as well, but all still have the same almost trademarked Noisex sound. [Brian Clarkson]

Null Device Sublimation



Contact:
Nilalithah
P.O. Box 82614
Columbus, OH 43202
U.S.

If Bronski Beat, New Order and Yaz all got together and mated, their musical child would most likely be Null Device. Many years after meeting at the University of Wisconsin and subsequent musical cooperation, the masterminds behind Null Device, Eric Oehler and Eric Goedken, bring us their first label release. Their music builds on the previous success of their MP3.com presence and on excellent remixes and production for Stromkern. Most of the album consists of melancholy dirges punctuated by a few moments of upbeat and slightly danceable tracks. The song "Word and Deed" with its Indian flavor courtesy of a tabla drum loop and strong, emotional vocals is the best song on the album. *Sublimation* is steeped with elements that without which, would normally make a synthpop album clonal and boring. "Sacré Coeur" is a song which takes us on a journey to Paris with its lyrics "Leaves fall by the riverside blown through the city of lights," and conjures up memories of lost love with

its chorus. A special treat on the album is a cover version of The Smith's "There is a Light," which provides a new revision of an old favorite, the vocals to which are eerily similar to the original. Null Device is very different from all other synthpop acts and are poised to take the scene by storm with their superb lyricism, programming and vocals. "Synthetic music for synthetic people," but with soul and style. [Nick Garland]

Pain Station Dead Is Dead



Contact:
COP International
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Oakland, CA, 94608
U.S.

The final sonic excursion by Scott Sturgis's Pain Station is a gnarled, electronically kneaded master piece of tortured synths plodding through Sturgis's gray matter wasteland. It's as if an electronic grid has been draped over Sturgis's skull and we are allowed to listen to the scarred discharges writhing within, an elastic topography of misery and pain. This elasticity opens the disc, as malleable electronics groan, skating through the desolation, on "Do You Feel It?" Concentrated, slightly processed vocals and stuttering, plodding percussion meld with the electronics, while a drill or some like-minded instrument whirrs in the background; later, synths of a stern nature are added to the mix. "Tell Me What You Want" is the sound of mental attrition, the rhythm, sluggish like a

broken calliope, lunacy rising to the top. Everything sounds squished, drugged, as though it's being dragged through muddy gray matter mush and put on display via the ground gruel sounds. Only an interlude of twisted, moaning metal deviates from the sick-hop stylings. Something is wrong here, and we are witness to the unraveling. Even the more melodic synth lines cannot mask the essence of one falling apart. Upbeat percussion creates an energized diversion during "Taint," only to be reminded of where we are by the same crusted in radioactive contamination vocals. The fried electronic haze of the title track gurgles merrily along amidst a foot dragging beat and moist, thickly popping bubbles. Synths hint at melodic direction without truly engaging it until the end approaches. As a follow up to my fave disc from 2000, *Cold, Dead Is Dead* is another masterpiece of cheerless mental dislocation and terminal despair, and further evidence that Sturgis is one of our most talented sonic engineers. [JC Smith]

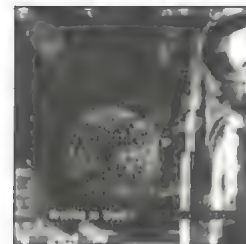
Paralysed Age Into the Ice



Contact:
Dancing Ferret Discs
526 S. 5th St
Philadelphia, PA 19147
U.S.

The cover of this album is so cool. A cartooned nordic woman is overlooking a black sea wearing a fur cape, fur boots, fishnets and a leotard with boobs to die for. It's so cheesy, I love it!! So I figured it would sound cheesy. But it's actually not bad. It is Goth Metal. No wait, it's Goth Heavy Metal. NOT to be confused with Goth Black Metal. It's great! no one has really done Goth Heavy Metal before. (Think Christian Death meets Ratt). I'm into it. [Lisa Swiss]

Genesis P-Orridge/ Z'ev Direction of Travel

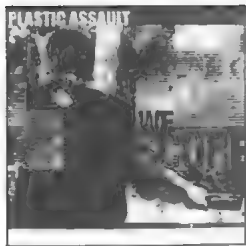


Contact:
Cold Spring Records
8 Wellspring
Blisworth, Northants
NN7 3EH, England
U.K.

This collaboration between industrial music pioneer Genesis P-Orridge and master atmosphere creator Z'ev is nothing short of brilliant. The two work with Tibetan bowls and bells, some drums, and some programming/mixing to create a work clearly intended as a backdrop for mediation and metaphysical travel. Each track is named after a compass point to highlight the theme laid out by the title. None of the tracks become intrusive since that would defeat the purpose of providing a soundtrack for an inner journey. The insert for the disc includes a small essay by Z'ev on trance and transformation from various philosophical, metaphysical and psychological viewpoints. This essay provides both good background material for the initiated and a good launching point for the novice. Psychonauts everywhere who enjoy a mellow musical accompaniment will love this album as I do. [Brian Clarkson]

Plastic Assault We Score!

Contact:
Bloodline
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41436 Nuess
Germany



People often ask me what it is about Industrial Music that I like so much? My answer is always the same: Industrial Music took over where punk left off. Remember back in the day, Punk used to be a threat. Now it's a marketing ploy sellable at your nearest mall. Well, Plastic Assault are the personification of that threat that I once held dear to my heart! *We Score!* is, quite simply, sheer aggressive hard-lined, in your face EBM at it's finest! It's a great mix of hardcore Midi (reminiscent of F.L.A.'s classic "Tactical Neural Implant"), aggressive vocals, angry, pseudo-political and intelligent lyrics, samples to die for (such is the case with the songs "Pesticide," sampling scum-punk legend G.G. Allin and "Splat," sampling ED209 from the cult classic movie Robocop) and even a touch of kitsch (as is the case with the song "80 frn"). The music is aggressive like a rabid pitbull: once it bites into you, it's not going to let up! The most awesome songs on the album are "Shotgun Blast" and one of my personal favorites, "Strangled." If you're into hardcore EBM, Plastic Assault are the cure for what ails ya. They're just what angry Rivetheads have been searching for, an alternative to the synth/future-pop humdrum craze. Hopefully, more bands will follow suit. [Rabbit von Hasenpfucker, Esq.]

Psyche Endangered Species

Contact:
Artofact Records
1057 Steeles Ave. W
P.O. Box 81630
Toronto, Ontario M2R 3Y1
Canada



Endangered Species is a full length remix album including four new tracks. It includes remix and production work by Wonderchild, Fast Cars, Sixty Winters, Massiv in Mensch and Electrohandel. In North America, Art of Fact have released the album with different artwork from euro label Accession. With the addition of Remi Szyska as sound technician, Psyche's sound now has fuller driving synth beats. This is exemplified by the remix treatments by the other musicians. Of the 12, dancetrack standouts include "Renegades," "The Hiding Place," "Momento," "The Beyond" and "Goodbye Horses." While the addition of fluttery bleeps might not be enjoyed by all, the synth dance crowd surely will.

Just a note about the bonus CD "Misguided Angels" included in this package, 16 earlier tracks rare, remixed or in demo form to complete one's Psyche collection. This CD has strong tracks like "Brain Collapses," "Unveiling the Secret," "Goodbye Horses" and "Sex Dwarf." Also on the Disc is an early demo of "Torture" featuring Dwayne Goettel (former Skinny Puppy keyboardist) who was a member of this band with the Huss brothers before they changed their name to Psyche. It's evident on this disc how much Psyche's sound has changed from the barren Casio style synths where voice seems to be the only

real instrument. Psyche's Darrin has never been afraid to express his appreciation of music by playing covers. Here we find "Goodbye Horses," "Suicide's Che" and Soft Cell's "Sex Dwarf." Psyche is now enjoying steady North American distribution with Art of Fact and the inclusion of this bonus disc shows their commitment. [DJ Bitter]

Pzycho Bitch Eden

Contact:
Dark Dimensions:
Frank D'Angelo
Wetzlarer Str.9
35630 Ehringshausen
Germany



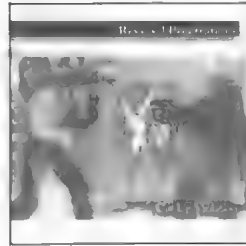
This is a project by the people behind Hands Productions band SINA, who also help out on Hands band Mono No Aware's debut, but despite the Hands connections this came out on Pro Noize. They have also released a single as Pzycho Bitch, which was decent, but this album is significantly better. In general the music is not miles from the SINA material, but overall it's not very similar to Mono No Aware. It incorporates such strong EBM, trance, and dnb elements into an overall power noise feel that it's really something in between. It should appeal strongest to rhythmic noise fans who also like EBM and/or EBM fans who are looking for something a bit harder or different. At the club, even many people who ordinarily don't like or even hate power noise but like elektro or EBM have reacted extremely favorably to this - "I could really get into it if most power noise was like this" is a common comment. The music is top-notch, well put together, constantly changing, uses a wide variety of awesome sounds, but is still crunchy and noisy too. Sina's vocals are present on most of the tracks, and always improve them, even when the music is already superb. I think she is my favorite female vocalist performing today, period. I was always a big fan of 99 Kowalski on Front 242's *Evil Off*, and Sina is at least as good, or probably better. But if you've heard 99 Kowalski, you get the basic idea, except Sina is a little more subdued and much more spoken-word than sung. It's difficult to compare Pzycho Bitch to other acts, because overall they don't quite sound like any, and yet it's clear they are somewhere between EBM and power noise, with sometimes strong elements from the techno world. With so many styles and sounds going off, it's amazing it's as cohesive and brilliant as it is.

Track 6 is probably my favorite on the disc, and it was also released as a single after this album came out. Tracks 1-2 and 4-7 are also awesome. I'd most recommend tracks 2, 5, 6, and 9 for the dancefloor. The beats are relentless and yet extremely catchy. The use of original sounds and their combination in original

ways is brilliant, bordering on genius! When they're on and cooking, they have few weaknesses. In general, it could use a little more melody, but every once in a while the melody is as strong as anybody else's. Also the slow tracks tend to drone on and be a bit uninteresting. Anyway, enough talk - the bottom line is this is an essential purchase this year, so go get it now! [Sarin]

Reversal Penetrations Cut up Violation

Contact:
COP international
98i Aileen Street
Oakland, CA, 94608
U.S.



The first thing that strikes someone upon seeing the cover art for this album, which consists of digitalized images of protesters of a G8 summit being cornered by police, is that immediate and obvious impression of a very politically conscious and politically motivated band. Musically, this turns out to be quite true, and in an intelligent and thoughtful manner. Move over Snog, here has come a band that can actually take politics seriously, and with far more interesting soundscapes. Musically speaking very interesting waveforms are used, giving a feel of a sort of ambient EBM, going back and forth between industrial's speed and atmospheric minimalism, sometimes simultaneously, but with no vocals used, only vocal samples... and quite interesting samples. Even the tracks which are less interesting musically are often quite fascinating purely for the didactic sound collage which layers back and forth over the

airy, wonderfully distressing synthesizers mood and the sometimes minimalistic sometimes very hard and danceable drum patterns. Only one complaint arises on this album, namely that some tracks have a preponderance of German rather than English samples, making understanding of their political message unfortunately more difficult. Overall, however, an absolutely genius album, especially for those into radical critique and questioning of politics and modern society (and well versed in the German language). [Robert Bisno]

Rob (u) Rang and Friends S/T

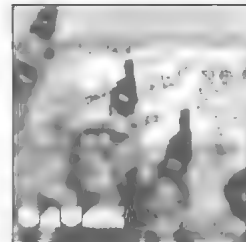
Contact:
Ant-Zen
P.O. Box 1257
93135 Lappersdorf
Germany



This humble reviewer still can't always draw the line between EBM and IDM, and with releases like this one from rob(u)rang, the line only gets fuzzier. There are seven tracks, all with an obsession with a driving (though not necessarily pounding) beat. The disc opens with an inorganic set of beats reminiscent of African tribal drumming, but only gets weirder from there. There aren't really any vocals to note, just distorted loops of vocal fragments that start sounding like one sentence and end up sounding like another one entirely - even though the words used are all the same. Funky distortion on top of strong beats really characterize this offering. [Brian Clarkson]

Savak The Taliban Pistol

Contact:
Unit Records
1624 Chapin St.
Alameda, CA 94501
U.S.

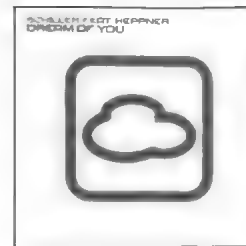


Savak is Scott Beebe, founder of Possessive Blindfold Records and one half of Holocaust Theory. Named after the Shah of Iran's secret police during the 1970's, Savak made its debut with the album *444 days*, a politically-minded power electronics experiment. his EP is an extension of that theme, this time examining the roots of terrorism found under the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, whose methods of governing are all-too familiar to anyone who has watched CNN in the last year. And while Beebe's liner notes discuss Bin Laden, it is made explicitly clear that Savak "does not support terrorism nor does it support counter-terrorism tactics." (Dubya is listed under the "no thanks to" section alongside Al Qaeda). The album is also dedicated to the victim's of 9-11 and their families, with proceeds from the sales of this record going to charities that help victim's families. But enough about politics - strip away the liner notes and song titles, and all that's left is the music, which is strong enough to stand separately from the subject matter. The chilling opening track "A Warning To All" guides listeners into the simple, beautifully ambient "The Faceless Enemy." The first half of the EP builds up energetic rhythms slowly, with a tense, minimalist style that digs under one's skin and becomes unsettling, especially on "Regime

in Tension" and the title track, which makes use of a sitar. The second half of *The Taliban Pistol* is comprised of five remixes, four of which are tracks from *444 days*. The thrumming DJ Tron mix of 'inside the mind v2' is noteworthy, as are the punchy explicit and atmospheric synapse contributions. The original and remixed works combine to make this a unique listening experience, full of desolation, power, tension and, ultimately, timeliness. [Theresa]

Schiller mit Heppner Dream of You

Contact:
Radikal Records
P.O. Box 186
Teaneck NJ 07666
U.S.



Let's be honest- the overwhelming majority of Industrialnation readers who purchase this disc will be hiding it under their beds with their Erasure records while purporting not to listen to that 'effeminate crap.' With that in mind, we promise we won't tell anyone that you are actually reading this review. *Dream of You* is an 8 track CD featuring the title track and seven remixes. The Schiller part of the equation, German techno scientists Mirko von Schlieffen and Christopher von Deylen, have been serving up deep trance cuts since the late nineties. The Heppner part, of course, is Wolfsheim vocalist Peter Heppner, who lends his trademark voice to what proves to be a very languid but exceptionally danceable track with the words 'club hit' written all over it. Do not be mistaken; this is not the brand of elektro-electronica crossover which conjures up images of lace-clad goths wielding glowsticks. Rather this is the type of dancefloor track that is mellow-yet-funky enough to get the club chicks in PVC gyrating their vinyl-clad asses in come-hither swishes. If that's not a selling point then I don't know what is. Of the remixes, none match the strength of the original mix, although the Ayla Remix - which retains the original's dreamy tone while upping the bpm's a few notches - comes close. And if the original wasn't dreamy enough, the 11-minute Chillout Remix will send you literally dreaming by the eighth minute. In all, Schiller mit Heppner's "Dream of You" CD is a recommended low-key, groove-worthy dance cut. Now all you have to figure out is how to get out of the record store without anyone seeing what you bought. [Kyronfive]

Seabound No Sleep Demon

Contact:
Dependent
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45841 Gelsenkirchen
Germany



Seabound's debut album, *No Sleep Demon*, is what happened when Dependent Records' Stefan Herwig let Futurepop's little nephew out to play. Seabound's Martin Vorbrodt and Frank Spinath are not, in fact, the genetic missing links between Ronan Harris and Eskil Simonsson, but they aren't miles away either. Despite comparisons, Seabound should be judged on its own merits, not it's better known family members. *No Sleep Demon* is a fairly sophisticated first record. Tracks like "Traveling" and

"Avalost" are superbly structured (and it's no mistake on "Travelling," Simonsson himself produced this track) with vocals that are executed by Spinath's beautiful and, if truth were told, damn sexy voice. Lyrically, *No Sleep Demon* contains a surprising level of depth and maturity. Spinath manages to plant a striking image or thought-provoking line into the dense lyrical folds of each of Seabound's songs. Sure, *No Sleep Demon* has its occasional freshman wobble, but, overall, the intelligence and simple catchiness of each of these ten tracks manages to win out. I'm hooked... no pun intended. [Kyronfive]

Seda E Marg Animosity

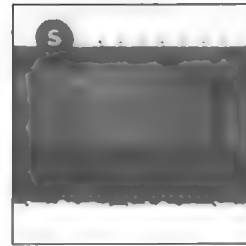
Contact:
Mechanoise Labs
5 Rue du Pont-aux-choux 75003
Paris
France



So you really thought them Ant-Zen crew were the most terrorist rhythm activists one could find? Maybe you thought their stuff was 'oh-so brutal.' Go ahead and send the children to bed because we're gonna talk about being brutal with Mechanoise Labs. Compared to this, Thunderdome-style hardcore techno (or the whole tribe of industrial-strength techno or whatever silly name it's called again) is as brutal as Kylie Minogue's latest single, and they're not naked in their videoclips, and this still makes them (a little) more valuable than the cocaine-driven pop star. Don't get me wrong, though, this is not just another Merzbow-wannabe (now that computers made it so easy, there's not enough room for their records in them huge green plastic rubbish containers down the street). It's good music, but it is harsh good music. You got some quiet moments, but those are LOUD quiet moments. Pretty good. [DDN]

Simulator Embrace The Unknown

Contact:
Cohaagen Music
P.O. Box 28293
Oakland, CA 94604
U.S.



This album was such an awesome surprise. Where did this come from? It's hard EBM & trance-influenced dance music with softened edges and irresistible melodies. But it doesn't drone on and on with trite crescendos, etc, like trance songs, but moves like a typical elektro song - i.e. you get what you want out of the song, then move on. That's a good thing! This artist totally gets it. The album's around 1/2-2/3 instrumental, with the male vocals generally like those in synthpop. The vox is nothing like Depeche Mode synthpop - closer to Wolfsheim, plus there is one remix which adds great breathy, babydoll female vocals. This is not future pop - it's got all the dancefloor energy, and a lot of emotion, but it's also very cerebral. You can enjoy this in the background or in the foreground. I don't think I can more highly recommend this album! More than anyone, I'd compare their sound to Decoder-era Noise Unit, which is a huge compliment from me, and furthermore in general the music would have been strong enough to actually be on that album and kept



the quality up. I think this is my favorite album so far this year, and the year's almost done.

My personal favorite track is track 10, but tracks 2-6 and 10-12 are all simply awesome tracks as well, with most of these being extremely clubworthy as well. The rest of the album is good, too, though, don't worry! Looking for some negative points, the vocals could be better, and I'm sure some people would have problems with them, but I liked them as is. More tracks with vocals, if done well, would have been ideal, but they're definitely good enough without. I actually prefer the remixes with lyrics, though. Slightly better production would have been ideal, but it's really fine. More sounds would have been good too, but again it's fine with what it has - I'd rather it as is than mucked with.

A few final random facts, I believe the musician behind Simulator also worked with Lost Signal, but Simulator is far, far better. This is also one of the first releases on the new California label Cohagen, and with this release they've really put themselves on the map. I like their other releases as well (Ganymede and Fr/action), but this should definitely be their flagship band. But keep an eye on Cohagen as well! [Sarin]

Sino Promote oo



Contact:
Rebuild Projects
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Machidashi, Tokyo
Japan

PROMOTE oo is a Japanese only release from the Tokyo based solo project after the breakup of that originally started in 1997. This six track CD-R EP is their first independent commercial release after 2 earlier demos. SINO (re-build projects) borne in 1999 is an interesting mix of electro noise and guitar fuzzbox feedback instrumental originals that is easy to listen to and danceable. Sino himself plays guitar/programming and electronics/programming by T. Makino. It is now getting distributed worldwide. "Brain & Mind" is just a short swirly synth piece while "Black Blood & Mad Brain" gets more structured with added guitar, beats and what sounds like a (traditional) Japanese flute. There are no liner notes to reference but I'm sure it's an electronic simulation. Echo is a big part of "Junk Me. . ." with beating drums. "Downer Beat" gets a bit punchier with similar themes. "Cyber 2999" is quirky programming with the guitar backing that blends in to grinding machinery like noises. The last track, "Sadistic Hyper Love"

starts with the omnipresent church organ as it progresses into full beaty melodic flight. This is the jewel of the disc.

The Japanese industrial noise scene is not represented or sold much here in North America so Sino's sound is quite fresh considering the many euro clones. Some of the music found here has been included as soundtrack in the PC Game BLOWOUT. From

the mind of Sino, this project does not miss a beat. A new collection is in the works - can't wait. [DJ Bitter]

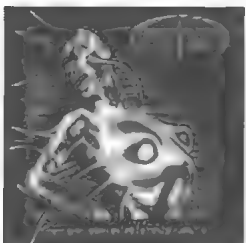
SMP Hacked



Contact:
Invisible
P.O. Box 16008
Chicago, IL 60616
U.S.

The hard-edged, Hip-Hop infused Industrial group SMP are back. Back with a vengeance. **Hacked** is a remix album with a more powerful Hip-Hop vibe to it. As a lover of Hip-Hop, EBM and Coldwave, SMP leaves nothing to be desired. The remixes are powerful, demanding and in-your-face. This album was a sheer joy to listen to. It was hard to not bob my head like a homie while listening to this album, and even harder not to just say screw this review and dance to it! This album features 2 remixes of "Chemical," 6 of "September," 2 of "Megaton," 2 of "Born of Science," and one from "Intensity," "Militia Love" and "Topside." All are done by some of EBM and Power NOIZe and TechnoOs best and brightest like Hybrid, Codec, Stromkern, Mindless Faith, and Thine Eyes. The beats are strong, concise, and make you want to "Go Off Like A Megaton!" Favorites on the album include, but are not limited to, "Megaton (Thine Eyes Mix)," "Chemicals (Mindless Faith Mix)" for its EBM induced surge of power, "Chemicals (Doll Factory Mix)" For its intense D+B beats and insane music, "Intensity (Cold Mix)" for its hard core MIDI passion, and "Megaton (Codec Mix)" for its reminder of the B-Boy that's hidden deep inside of this Rivethead's body. **Hacked** is a pure hard beat driven ride into insanity. What a great album! [Rabbit von Hasenpfucker, Esq.]

SMP Terminal



Contact:
Underground Inc
P.O. Box 16008
Chicago, IL 60616
U.S.

Don't get me wrong. I like SMP a lot. I mean, **Terminal** was, for me, the best album of 2000. Unfortunately, this is not **Terminal**. This is, in fact, a "Jason Bazinet's greatest hits" album, collecting songs from "Terminal" and "Ultimatum," as well as

new tracks, "Acid Drop" and "Analogue Assassins," from the "Notes From Thee Real Underground" series. In all fairness, it isn't quite right to even call it **Terminal**, as it contains only 9 of the original 17 tracks, having trimmed out everything touched by Sean Ivy after his departure from the band and replaced them with some of Jason's favorites from the past two albums. A fantastic and well-balanced electro-punk-rap album now sounds very hollow in it's new form. I understand the need to release an album that you can tour behind and Underground Inc. is a great opportunity for SMP's music to finally see daylight. And I admit tracks like "Chemicals," "Pictures Of You," and "Megaton" still satisfy, but this is a case of insufferable revisionist history. It doesn't seem right to finally offer fans easy access to your album nationwide, but make no attempt to tell them that this isn't the album they think it is. And without upbeat tracks like "Policy," "Dirt," "Anthem," and "Mothkiller" on this "improved" album to balance out Jason's more downbeat industrial-rap, this **Terminal** is inaccessible. Fortunately for fans, ADSR Musicwerks still has copies of the original version available. [Ryan Speck]

Sonic Dragolgo Don't Stop The Music



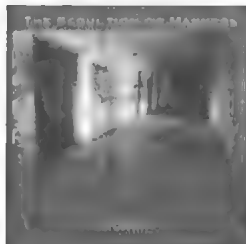
Contact:
Klangkrieg Produktionen
Dirschauer Str. 9
10245 Berlin
Germany

Possibly, the most original release of the year. An incredible blend of extremely diverse influences makes something completely unique, and yet despite the experiment, and corresponding risk of failure, it comes together with amazing results. It's like a trashy guitar pop band crashes full steam into a power-noise band, sometimes alternating between them and other times playing them together, and with blasts of janoise thrown in frequently at the right points in the beat. And chase it down with a sweet electro (electro with a c) track at the end. There are some kinks in it, but all things considered they are very few. I wouldn't be surprised if we hear more like this in the future from other bands, and if it's even half as strong as this, it'd be very welcome indeed!

I honestly love almost every track on the disc, minus 3, 10, and 11. Track 6 is definitely my favorite, for being extremely strong in melody, originality, and rhythm, three areas I care very deeply about. The lyrics aren't so bad, either. I'd say tracks 2, 6, 9, and 12 are the best for the dancefloor.

I'd like it a little more if it were catchy and/or beat-driven a little more often, 'cause it occasionally drags a little, but it's still a marvelous achievement. [Sarin]

Sophia The Seduction of Madness



Contact:
Cold Meat Industries
SE-595 41
Mjölby
Sweden

Ever wonder what kind of music those voices in

your head listen to? **The Seduction of Madness** is a 23-minute jump into the dark world of Sophia. The cover of the album is a picture of an abandoned sanitarium. It's a fitting cover, as this CD would be a fantastic soundtrack for such a place. The music is sometimes minimal, almost quiet, with dissonant keyboards that seem to both calm and unnerve. Other times, gigantic drums explode from nowhere, snare drums echo endlessly against rotting walls. There is a definite sense of classical music to this album, trumpet calls mix with a swirling vortex of choral voices.

The biggest flaw with the disc is its length. After 23 minutes, you feel as if you're ready for a grand climax of the album, and then... silence... it's over. It leaves me hungry for more, which may very well have been the artist's intention. I feel it is too short, but it's a great (and cheap) starting point for newcomers to Sophia. [Rick Kinney]

State of Being Implosion



Contact:
StateofBeing
P.O. Box 770413
Cleveland, Ohio 44107
U.S.

State of Being steadily progressed over the years from a solo project started by Christopher Foldi in 1989, to a full-fledged band effort with the non-synthetically produced instrumentation seeming to outweigh the synthesizers as of late. On their most recent release, **Implosion**, the follow-up album to the 1998 EP **Static in my Brain**, the group continues to fine-tune their electro-darkwave sound. Moving from the classical industrial genre and more towards a modern synth-hybrid, **Implosion** exhibits a melodic and edgy texture throughout its entirety. Another noteworthy observation is how the album also manages to satisfy fans of the Fields of the Nephilim School of dark balladry on the songs "Rain" and "Awake until Dawn," along with a few other tracks--yet I really wouldn't go as far to call it Goth Rock--since all the selections are rather varied in their structure, and presentation. One really interesting offering is, "Fall," which starts with a very Art of Noise type intro, and moves quickly into a quirky coldwave tune with backing vocals by Shara--Scott's wife, and co-collaborator. (One could also say the band is a family affair since Scott, Christopher's Brother, and Rayanne, Shara's sister are also in the band.) Finally, the closing remix of the third song "Instinct," "Instinct (Metal and Glass)," is expertly "reconstructed" by Andy Kubiszewski of former Stabbing Westward relations. The remix rocks a really slick organic texture of clinking glass and synthetic tweaking, and is most likely the standout single of the album-kind of like Neubauten on barbiturates. [LucastaSin]

State of the Union Black City Lights



Contact:
WTII Records
P.O. Box 13495
Chicago, IL 60613
U.S.

Already signed to Accession Records in Germany, State of the Union has made waves in the German Alternative Charts and have made a name for themselves as a rising talent in the EBM and elektro scenes. **Black City Lights** is a straightforward elektro album that combines the edginess of industrial with the sensibility and accessibility of synthpop. The title track, with its pounding bass, clanky drums and a synth line that is reminiscent of the X-files theme, calls us all to duty with the line "Send a message, be a leader not a follower." The album is a well-crafted combination of both personal and political messages, signified by samples of presidential speeches in the songs "Citizen" and "Mankind" and these are some of the highlights of the disc. A trance influence can be felt in the song "Vicious Sentiment" with its soothing synth strings, drilling bass and the energetic buildups for a very catchy chorus. Most of the tracks are suitable for the dancefloor, but also appropriate for leisurely home listening. Few artists come along with a debut album from which a single would be difficult to select. State of the Union have such an album -- whereby each track is a remarkably well-crafted song. [Nick Garland]

Stoa Zal



Contact:
Scanner
Wetzlarer Strabe
D-35630 Ehr.ngshausen
Germany

My mom liked it! It soothed her while sitting in my scary living room listening to me rant and rave on how Jack Skellington should be my boyfriend. "Very new agey" she said. "Almost as good as Yanni." I gave it to her. Anyway, Stoa are very talented, classical musicians. The only instruments that are used on this are oboe, harp, piano and cello only. And very pretty female vocals. Good for nice dinner music with the in-laws? Personally, I'd rather put on Christian Death's **Only Theatre of Pain** at dinnertime but what are you going to do? Decent, if classical Projekt bands float your boat. [Lisa Swiss]

StromKERN re-align



Contact:
WTII Records
P.O. Box 13495
Chicago, IL 60613
U.S.

Yet another former IN-writer Ned Kirby comes at us with his project, Stromkern. Since the mid-90s, Ned has been creating music. After listening to **Re-align**, I see a big future for Stromkern. The Industro-EBM-Jam Rock sound is remarkably well produced, and has extreme potential. The definite power struggle between the EBM beat and the aggressive Killing Joke-esque style lyrical assault makes this a uniquely brilliant release. Having heard so many groups labeled "Hip-Hop Industrial," this moniker usually causes me to cringe in agony. However, in this release, the Hip-Hop influence is executed without the usual cringe-effect. A particularly good example of the well-done Hip-Hop influence is on track #7, "Keeping Time." If Stromkern were a penny stock, I'd

sink my whole allowance into it. I'm not only saying that because Ned is a swell guy. [vigviger]

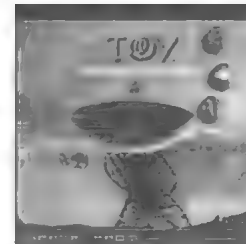
Synapscape Positive Pop



Contact:
Ant-Zen
P.O. Box 1257
93135 Laapersdorf
Germany

With **Positive Pop**, Synapscape may have beaten BiGod 20's **Supercute** for the biggest record name misnomer ever. This is very clearly not pop music, positive or otherwise, unless you consider maniacal beats and cataclysmic sound bytes to be the kind of thing you'd expect from a Britney Spears concert. Of course, that shouldn't detract from the obvious appeal of this record, particularly to those who'd rather sample the sound of a Spice Girls CD exploding in a microwave than listen to it. Tracks like "Thirsteater" and "Orbleflex" are everything you'd expect from Synapscape: rhythmic pounding, disembodied electronic glitches, and distorted, whispery vocals. Tracks like "Bizarre Disco Junky" and "The Power of Love," however, leave power-noise's trappings aside and focus on dense, layered sounds and usual beat structures that are both aggressive and fresh. On **Positive Pop**, Synapscape don't exactly leave their powernoise brothers behind, but they do stir things up enough to at least qualify as a black sheep of the family. In all, you could call **Positive Pop** a light-handed take on noise... or an extremely challenging, mutant variety of pop music. You can decide if it's positive. [Kyrionfive]

T.O.Y. Space Radio



Contact:
E-Wave / BMG
Drakkar Entertainment GmbH
Bergerstraße 6
D-58452 Witten
Germany

If you haven't heard yet, the legendary dark-electro-synth act, Evil's Toy, have dropped their evil façade, and are now going as T.O.Y.. According to an earlier press release, their music simply, "no longer evil." As if this wasn't enough, "T.O.Y." isn't just a shortened version of "Evil's Toy," but an anagram for, "Trademark Of Youth." Whatever that means. "Trademark of Selling Out" would be more appropriate. The music is the sort of catchy, homogenized, synth-pop that you would expect a major label to put out. Don't get me wrong, I LOVE synth-pop, but this is uninspiring, emotionally devoid, house music with sappy lyrics and a wee bit of psy trance thrown in. Gone are the snarling, Cobra Commander-like vocals that would suddenly change into something like Destro/Megatron during the chorus. Now, Volker sings like a serious Leonard Nemoy trying very hard to sound like a happy Peter Murphy. It may not be evil, but it is kinda creepy. Every song does have heavy orchestral synth pads running through it, however, they're nowhere near as powerful as the synths used by E.T.. Instead of the synths carrying the harmony of the song, they

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drone along in what appears to be more of an attempt to take up the dead space around the cliché, watered down, oontz, oontz, oontz, beats. T.O.Y. may not be quite as cheesy as S.P.O.C.K., or as transparent as Apoptygma Berzerk, but they will forever exist in the shadows of Evil's Toy. *Space Radio* is a clean, well produced album, if you're only talking about production quality. There are a couple of "o.k." tracks on the disc, but aside from those, it has about as much depth as a television commercial. Go buy the new Assemblage 23 CD, or any of the Evil's Toy back catalog. [Cosmo]

TRS-80 Mr. Kickass

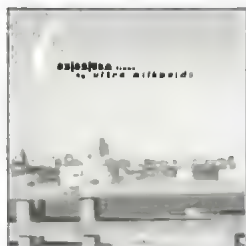
Contact:
Underground Inc.
P.O. Box 16008
Chicago, IL 60616
U.S.



I just had the opportunity to see this fine band again in Chicago, playing at the Double Door. TRS-80 is a combination of complicated beats, clever samples and keyboard moves. Whether live or from a CD this is a sure thrill. There is just enough repetition in the programming to groove on and just when you think you've got it down something new is thrown at you. Live the band plays with a synchronized video projecting on the performers playing a combination of science fiction and seventies theme visuals. This is also reflected in the music whether it's the odd samples or the choices of hypnotic structures. Here is a new exciting album from a Chicago electro-industrial band that is cool without attitude. I have never been disappointed with any of their CDs or live shows. [Dan Layne]

Ultra Milkmaids 03/02/USA

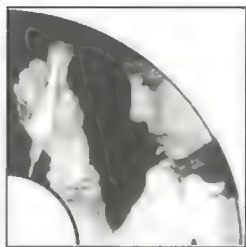
Contact:
Y & R
18 Rue appert
44100 Nantes
France



Memories of their U.S. tour mixed (but not edited) to 21 minutes of pure pleasure. The best artistic comparison I can come to is a painting, something careful and delicate, something you imagine the painter has been thinking of for months and then is about to render in a couple of hours with very little color and very little (traits). Sweet repetitive tunes played louder and louder till they become walls of melody. Sweet little drops of joy coming from a broken Alien-Beauty-Generator™. Limited to 50 copies: RUN AND BUY IT, cause I already have one and that's 49 left. [DDN]

V./Ultra Milkmaids Drone and Unease

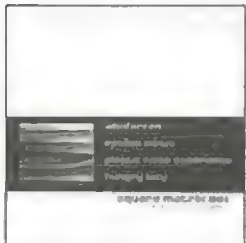
Contact:
Zero Moon
4518 Avenida ST. Apt. B
Bethesda, MD 20814
U.S.



Old school industrial meets electronica. Imagine the bunkers Throbbing Gristle used to play in, covered in flowers and perfumed with subtle scents of lavender and lilac and you're halfway there. Great. Inspired, melodic, rhythmic, violently beautiful and so varied too (I'm not part of Zero Moon's staff... yet). These bands both toured in the U.S. and played several shows together, with almost nobody in front of them, or so it's said. But you know: "people ain't no good, they never do what I think they should." [DDN]

Various Artists Square Matrix 001

Contact:
Alfa Matrix
90 Rue Charles Degroux
1040 Brussels
Belgium



Boosted by their association with Belgian magazine Side-Line, Alfa Matrix has become one of the most popular dark electronic labels in Europe. Their extremely successful Cyberlab compilations showcase the best in dark electro talent from across the world and from different labels. *Square Matrix 001* is a split single featuring four bands: Aiboforcen, Epsilon Minus, Plastic Noise Experience (PNE), and Hungry Lucy (lead vocalist Christa Belle is a Lexington Native). All artists except for Aiboforcen are relative newcomers on the label but prove that the neophytes can sure test the limits of the label veterans. This album provides

for a nice dichotomy sure to please the ears of all fans - the pounding, aggressive tracks of Aiboforcen and PNE balance the lovely vocals of both Epsilon Minus and Hungry Lucy. Standing out on the album is the beat-driven Aiboforcen Mix of Hungry Lucy's "Fearful," a perfect amalgamation of musical intensity and vocal subtlety. The clank and clatter of "Mechanical Beatz" by PNE will make you imagine being in Frankenstein's laboratory as the ray gun sounds jolt Claus Kruse's musical monster into life. The popular song "Freedom" by Canadian band Epsilon Minus gets the remix treatment by Dutch band Angels and Agony who create a slow-paced, beat-heavy collage of beautiful female vocals. *Square Matrix 001* will most assuredly make its way to many dancefloors, but should also hold a special place in your home stereo. [Nick Garland]

Various Artists Critical Mass Vol. 3

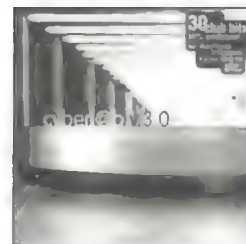
Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.



There's a French Industrial Electronics label, yes there is ma'am, and it's called Brume Records. Someone recently told me people in our rather uncivilized country needed some kind of stars to trick them into difficult music and this is the appropriate CD. There's Mlada Fronta of course (how could you do any kind of French electronics comp without them) for the ambient soundtrack-like easy part and Komintern for the easy-but-harsh-dance-floor part. Flint Glass as well may be seen as easier music but his cocktail of deep watery drones (and something that sounds like the didgeridoo electronic counterpart) and dub-like rhythms build up something that can act as a bridge between easy and not-so-easy electronics. My personal favorites: Holger Vice (who quite amusingly uses very 1980-sounding drumkits to build up some kind of dry and sharp dance music for very slow androids, the kind Kraftwerk could've shown on stage-or think Visage after the Apocalypse), Prbn, techno for robots (for very serious-looking warlike black steel ones this time), and Atelier 112, an experimental-impro collective, managing to do noise-electronics-sounding music with acoustic instruments. Best track featured there. There's a video of their shows as well on the CD and it rocks. [DDN]

Various Artists - Cyberlab v.3.0 Electro-Industrial Compilation

Contact:
Alfa Matrix
90 Rue Charles Degroux
1040 Brussels
Belgium

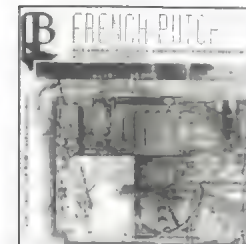


Since it's inception five years ago as a mostly vinyl sublabel of Ant Zen, Hymen has grown into the place to go for IDM, as it houses some of the genre's most-respected bands. This dense comp allows the many bands collected here (Baracuda, Beefcake, Starfish Pool, and Somatic Responses, for starters) to play their own variations on that theme. Some artists play up glitchy breakbeats, like the tense "Parasitus" from Venetian Snares and Fanny's "Witches v2," while others go the minimalist route, notably Imminent, offering here a decidedly different sound from their more aggressive fare. The recently signed Gridlock contributes a beautiful, pastoral piece and So Fuckin' Jazz, comprised of David Thrussel and Darrin Verrhagen, of Snog and Shinjuku Thief and Filth, respectively, puts forth a good track as well. My personal favorite song has to be Dead Hollywood Stars' "Dreamland's Burning (fnga Mix)," which, with its twangy acoustic guitars and gunshot samples, plays like some futuristic Ennio Morricone score. This

dramatic sounds to create a very danceable song. I thoroughly enjoyed this compilation, and recommend it strongly. [MalignantFemale]

Various Artists French Putsch

Contact:
Brume Records
98 avenue de Flandre
75019 Paris
France



There's a French Industrial Electronics label, yes there is ma'am, and it's called Brume Records. Someone recently told me people in our rather uncivilized country needed some kind of stars to trick them into difficult music and this is the appropriate CD. There's Mlada Fronta of course (how could you do any kind of French electronics comp without them) for the ambient soundtrack-like easy part and Komintern for the easy-but-harsh-dance-floor part. Flint Glass as well may be seen as easier music but his cocktail of deep watery drones (and something that sounds like the didgeridoo electronic counterpart) and dub-like rhythms build up something that can act as a bridge between easy and not-so-easy electronics. My personal favorites: Holger Vice (who quite amusingly uses very 1980-sounding drumkits to build up some kind of dry and sharp dance music for very slow androids, the kind Kraftwerk could've shown on stage-or think Visage after the Apocalypse), Prbn, techno for robots (for very serious-looking warlike black steel ones this time), and Atelier 112, an experimental-impro collective, managing to do noise-electronics-sounding music with acoustic instruments. Best track featured there. There's a video of their shows as well on the CD and it rocks. [DDN]

Various Artists Masonic

Contact:
Hymen, c/o Ant Zen
P.O. Box 1257
93135 Lappersdorf
Germany

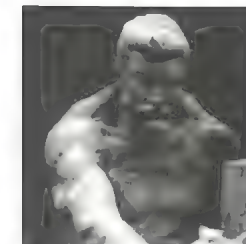


Operating under the assumption that most of you are well aware of the previous efforts of VNV Nation, I'll skip the history and jump right to the future, or *Future Perfect* that is. Being that you're probably already familiar with *Advance and Follow*, *Praise the Fallen*, and/or *Empires*, you're also already familiar with the emotionally driven lyrics of Ronan Harris. And this is the aspect of this project that often receives most of the attention. But what *Future Perfect* shows probably better than any of the prior releases, is that Ronan Harris and Mark Jackson ain't stupid. Let's start with the title: *Future Perfect*, which is an intelligent title, one laden with its own significance and history. This was a slogan from the

mostly mellow collection is definitely for fans of Autechre, Aphex Twin, or any of the artists on the Warp roster. [Theresa]

Various Artists Zu Neuen Ufern in Alter Frische

Contact:
Hau Ruck
Postfach 44
1133 Wien
Austria



Label samplers are always such tricky beasts. The better known bands almost never offer up their best material, while the lesser known bands are sometimes known for offering up the only song they have worth half a shit to entice you into picking up their full album. Then there's always the tax write-off band which brings down the whole listening experience. Well, these problems are doubled when the label is as diverse as the Austrian label Hau Ruck. By my count, *Zu Neuen Ufern* goes through 5 genres in under an hour. You start off with "power noise" ala SPK from C.O.C., then weird vaguely militaristic euro-industrial from Derneire Volonte & Novy Svet (an off-track from Novy Svet, unfortunately), then into EBM from Novo Homo and Der Blutharsch's side project La Maison Moderne, then into ambient tracks from His Divine Grace and Reutoff, and finally the CD lurches into embarrassingly bad, hand-to-forehead-stapling goth, from a tax write-off band called "Changes." The result is jarring, and hard to listen to in one sitting. But when listening to individual songs instead of the disjointed whole, certain tracks shine brilliantly. Derniere Volonte and La Maison Moderne contribute solid songs. The ambient track from His Divine Grace is incredible, and worth the price of the disc by itself. I recommend this sampler to people with diverse tastes and diverse radio shows. Or to anyone who doesn't mind preprogramming his cd player to skip certain tracks. The whole is less than the sum of its parts, but for under 10 bucks, you could do a hell of a lot worse. [Rick Kinney]

VNV Nation Future Perfect

Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.



Operating under the assumption that most of you are well aware of the previous efforts of VNV Nation, I'll skip the history and jump right to the future, or *Future Perfect* that is.

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there are ten commandments

there are seven deadly sins

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Futurists of the early twentieth century, who were the first avant-garde collective to reach a mass audience. The futurists, with Marinetti as their loudest voice, were the first prophets of a frenetic industrial age. Their message was simple; the future is here, and we better start acting like it by actively planning our destinies. This seems to be the general theme of *Future Perfect* as well. It's important to point out too that this title is ironic, the futurists were also know for their love of war and their eventual ties with Italian Fascism and Mussolini. We can be quite certain however that this is not the intended message of *Future Perfect* given the "socially conscious" opening track "Foreword" (in various languages), and Ronan's personal statement concerning *Future Perfect* found on the VNV Nation website, which advocates humanism more than any other ism.

So is *Future Perfect* future pop? To some maybe, but songs such as "Electronaut" and "Structure" are barely recognizable as VNV songs upon first listen, and even the tracks with vocals just don't sound as 'pop' as other recent releases within this genre. Sure, most of this album is smoother and potentially easier to digest than say *Praise the Fallen*. And yes, the distortion pedal (or rather plug-in to the tech heads- the majority of this album was composed within the software realm) was used sparingly. This may be considered a bad thing amongst growing numbers of you who are tired of the softer direction taken by many acts of this genre as of late, but what *Future Perfect* offers is a thoughtful and relevant rant for our times. This in addition to the usual dose of Ronan's heart felt lyrics.

On the whole, *Future Perfect* is another must have for hardcore VNV Nation fans looking to complete the trilogy started with *Praise the Fallen* and *Empires*. But taken alone, this one might not be quite as meaningful or earth shattering to the new-

comer in comparison to either of these previous releases. [Jon VanWieren]

Voltaire Boo Hoo

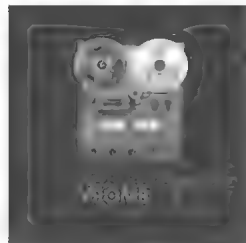
Contact:
Projekt
P.O. Box 9140
Long Island City, NY 11103
U.S.



As much as I can appreciate a CD compiled of only broken hearted, woe is me, wretched love songs- and have the CD be entitled *Boo Hoo*- I don't quite get Voltair's mopey humor. Ok, sure, it's cute. It's funny. But the music stinks and so does his vocals. If it were Morrissey or Robert Smith I'd say, we have a winner!! But the monotonous, acoustic guitar and Italian eatery violin is boring and Voltaire's droning vocals grate on my nerves. I am sorry your heart was broken, dear, but don't make the rest of us suffer. [Lisa Swiss]

Vromb Memoires Paramoleculaires

Contact:
Disques Hushush Inc.
Case Postale 1.7.
Succ. De Lorimer
Montréal, Québec H2H 2N6
Canada

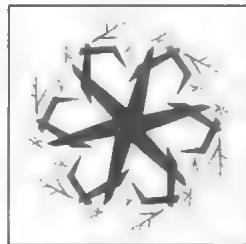


The accompanying booklet notes: "*Memoires Paramoleculaires* is committed to throw the necessary light on the shadow zones established, sometimes fortuitously, by professor Heurel Gaudot." Now, I can't seem to find much information on this

Professor Gaudot, but the impression I get from listening to the disc and reading the booklet notes is that Gaudot was trying to discover links between certain sound frequencies and brain activity or brain waves. This disc, like a lot of other premeditated dark electronica, presents a soundscape upon which a listener can add any level of interpretation. The low-key analog-to-digital loops offer many possible interpretations, many possible pathways. The aim of the disc has been met. [Brian Clarkson]

:Wumpscut: Wreath of Barbs

Contact:
Metropolis Records
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.



:Wumpscut:, in my opinion, are always right on top as far as industrial music. They never fail me. Their sound and albums are always consistent but never boring or overdone. And *Wreath of Barbs* is what you would expect, and want, from :Wumpscut:. Like each of their other records, they have songs that I love and can't get off repeat and other songs so noisy or demented, I have to shut it off to regain my sanity. :Wumpscut: melds oppressive and sinister electronics, guitars and vocals with almost tranquil soundscapes at certain times, interesting female chant-like vocals and insane male-sung lyrics. Although never a band to come out with lots of club hits, the first song on *Wreath of Barbs*- "Opening the Gates of Hell" (appropriately titled since :Wumpscut: always seems to take you on a trip down a devilish path) comes close to being a good song to move your body to. The sec-

ond song, "Deliverance," also gets you going but then after that *Wreath of Barbs* slows way down- by industrial standards anyway. Kind of takes you on a crazy ride to a schizophrenic underworld with talk of evil doctors- "Dr. Thodt" (death), corpses, death and blood. Uncannily enough, the last song does a slight turn to the less evil but none the less it is still creepy. If you like :Wumpscut:, you'll like this. [Lisa Swiss]

:Wumpscut: Liquid Solyent 2CD

Contact:
Beton Kopf Media
Karl-Stadler-Weg 41
D-84028 Landshu
Germany



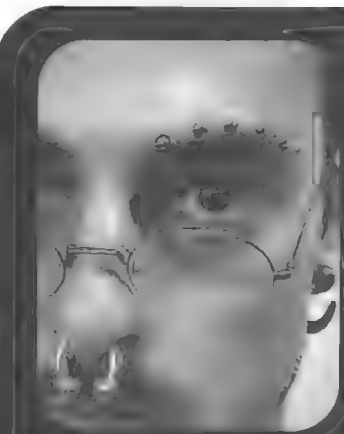
This release strikes me as being more for the collector of DJ than for the average listener. *Liquid Solyent* collects tracks from now-deleted EPs (namely the Deliverance MCD, the Ich Will Dich MCD, The Remix Wars MCD, and the Boeses Junges MCD). Four mini-CDs on two full-length CDs sounded like a great deal at the time, but listening to four different versions of "Deliverance" or "Ich Will Dich" back-to-back isn't really all that amusing. This disc is best put into a multi-disc player with four or so other discs so the shuffle-action can take effect. For those :Wumpscut: fans that need to own every possible version of every song ever released, this is a great find. For people looking to discover a new band, there is not enough variety here to really showcase the band. [Brian Clarkson]

Zeromancer Eurotrash

Contact:
Cleopatra Records
13428 Maxella Ave #251
Marina del Rey, CA 90292
U.S.



The ultra popular Norwegian band The Siegmen disbanded in 1999- only to find half of the band resurfacing soon afterward in 2000 as Zeromancer. ZMR's 2000 release, *Clone Your Lover*, on Germany's East West Records was a welcome edition to the scene, and the band proceeded to tour all over Germany with electro greats Project Pitchfork in 2001. Their latest release, *Eurotrash*, has finally arrived state-side via Cleopatra records in the U.S., and again on East West in Europe. Zeromancer is the perfect band for people who find the VNV-type synthcore trend a little too soft, and true aggcore a little to jagged. The band's sound is complete futuristic arena rock, with plenty of synth layering and uber catchy anthems. "Doctor Online" is the standout track with its infectious "I-800-Suicide" hook. Zeromancer takes welcome amounts of indulgence with their heavy guitar lines reminiscent of first-gen Die Krupps, or a perhaps a more melodic cousin of Cubanate on heavy hitters like "Chromebitch" and "Need You Like a Drug." Perfect for the dance floor, or personal mind-numbing enjoyment, *Eurotrash* is one album that you shouldn't throw away. [LucastaSin]



Experimental/Noise DEMO Reviews

BY Brian Clarkson

Reviewing experimental and noise releases is always a mixed experience. The genres are so varied that the each release is never the same. This time around, the demos submitted almost fall into a few easy categories: atmospheric, rhythmic, and just plain strange.

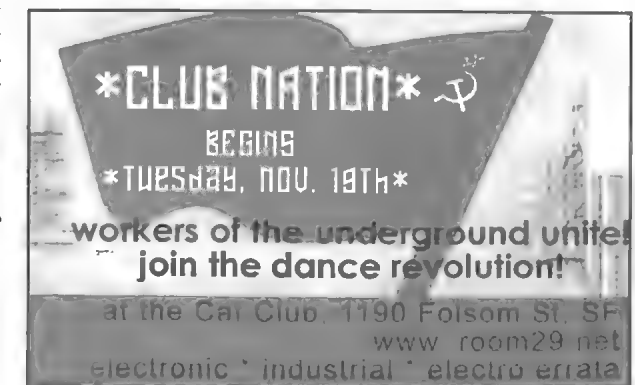
One of the first of the atmospheric releases comes from Houston, TX bases Psychonaut75. They sent in a 4-track sampler from the upcoming album *The Primordial Deep*, a disc (and press kit) full of mysticism. The band's self-expressed aim is to create soundtracks for magickal rituals, and their darkwave-inspired music accomplishes their aim. Unfortunately, not all the other atmospheric releases were as excellent as this one. Barto, PA's Murder Legendre sent their *Understatement of Extremes*, and the title says is all for this one. Each track was an understated electronic soundscape nearly indistinguishable from the others. There were lots of swirly noises and low frequency noise, but nothing about the disc stood out as inspirational. I almost couldn't distinguish the CD from the ringing in my ears from too many club nights. Benjamin I. Zavodnick (of Northampton, PA) sent in a CD titled *Oh Yesterday*, a disc comprised of extremely mellow, low-key synthesizer (or perhaps just keyboard) based atmospheres that also fell a bit short of the inspirational mark. Not a bad effort, but it felt a little flat and premeditated.

A large chunk of this column's 'experimental' demos fell into the 'rhythmic' category- drum-machine driven pieces without vocals. This reviewer isn't too sure that really counts as 'experimental'... On the top of the review stack was South Haven, MI locals Concrete. *Equation of the Blue Horse* sounded a little primitive, almost as though the band was working with older, more primitive equipment. This release could almost be called 'old-school' industrial rather than 'experimental'; their focus is on beat with some random chaos tossed in for good measure. A vocal track would add so much to this release. The next disc on the pile comes from a band called Firefly. All I got with this one was a CDR and a color printout of the cover art I assume would be included in a real release. At first, *Multiple Personalities* struck me as a little slice of powernoise goodness coming from my speakers. I had to give it a second listen to be sure, though, and the second listen left me feeling a bit flattened. Firefly's combination of drum machine and synthesizer

weirdness grabbed my attention alright, but it didn't hold onto it for very long. I can't put my finger on it, but there's something missing the disc is either too predictable at times or too random- but not at the same times. Yipotash's *Siamesic Death* is a similar release. One could almost call it power-noise based on the simple, repetitive inorganic drum beats that build up to a near-frenzy, but the BPM count stays too low to really whip the listener into a frenzy. It's almost like this band from Dresden, Germany is starting to show what they can do, but are holding back. But, just leave it to Texans to not hold back one bit. Blowtorch's *Soundscapes for the Mentally Insane* is a big slab of bombastic drum-machine driven chaos. I'd almost call this disc a collection of 'sample-scapes' because of their reliance on samples to drive the music home.

Rounding out the demos this time around is the catchall 'weird' category. One of the discs on the stack is here only because it didn't go anywhere else. Ordinance sent in a copy of *Buckshot*, but it's really not experimental at all. It's a pretty standard set of 'industrial' tracks: drum machines, keyboards, over-sampled vocals, the works. Holy Cow's *Purge* does fall into the generally weird category. I'd almost liken this to early Current93 material; there's a strange resemblance to some of their noisier 'apocalyptic folk' pieces. The emphasis on this disc is the vocal content, though. The creepy background noise almost isn't strong enough to complement the distorted vocals. Another genuinely strange disc came from Ginger Leigh. *Broken by the world*, though created with a Korg, sounds more like a 'world-music' piece than an 'experimental' release. I'm not sure this one got sent to the right target audience.

Until next time



Back in 1986, Johan Van Roy began experimenting with electronic music as Suicide Commando. It was not long after his first tape when he began making his first appearances on compilations. By the mid 90's, Van Roy was firing on all cylinders as he got signed to German label Offbeat and took his first steps on stage. These developments planted the seeds for nearly a dozen club hits and three European tours. Yet after sixteen years, nine tapes, eight full length discs and well over a

SUICIDE COMMANDO



Interview
by PHIL.PTI

hundred live performances under his belt, Johan Van Roy is showing no signs of slowing down. Suicide Commando isn't your cliché veteran over-the-hill band fresh out of ideas. Despite an upcoming retrospective release *Anthology* just around the corner, we can rest assured that Johan has a few aces up his sleeve for this upcoming year. Can we say Suicide Commando World Tour 2003 sooner than you think!

IN: Some artists try to distance themselves from the scene while working on an album to limit their influences. But as a DJ you fully engulf yourself with music. Do you feel that it makes a difference in your sound?

Johan: Not really, I've always been closely involved with the scene, either as DJ or just as guest at parties. I always liked to have a certain connection with the scene, just trying to be a part of it and not above it.

IN: Along with being a musician, DJ and concert promoter, you also hold down a full time day job. If you had the chance to do music full time, would you jump at the chance? Or would you rather keep it as a hobby or "release?"

Johan: I definitely would grab the opportunity if it ever would occur, but unfortunately it's not a good moment to take such risks, with all the illegal cd piracy and copying.

IN: What do you find the most challenging of all your projects?

Johan: Suicide commando is definitely the most challenging of all my projects as I'm doing these

other projects just for the fun, my work for suicide commando is way more serious and is taking nearly all my free time. Each new CD is another challenge as I always want to improve and deliver a better product, each time you have to start from zero again and it's amazing to see how such a product grows and evolves.

IN: You've been developed a working relationship with Stephan Herwig since his days at Off Beat. Do you see your relationship with him and Dependent continuing long into the future?

Johan: Don't know ... I guess the future will tell! In fact we already had a working relationship even before the Off Beat period as Stefan already had his own small label called Kugelblitz where I released some Suicide Commando works. I think I can say that we always had a good and solid partnership, which is not always that evident these days.

At the moment we still have a contract for one more CD, what happens after that is still unknown ... we'll see what happens!

IN: In the past few years the scene has taken a sharp turn towards the more melodic side of things. Does this move-

ment have legs? Or will it prove to be a trend?

Johan: There's definitely a trend towards more melodic and pop sounding music (future pop) these days with bands like VNV Nation, Covenant, Assemblage 23, Apoptygya Berzerk, Icon of coil, but I have no idea how long this trend will stay. I don't consider myself or suicide commando being a part of this so called future pop scene, but it's true that with the *Mindstrip* album I tried to include some more danceable influences. Personally I don't want to be part of any trend, I'm just doing my thing! I already survived some other trends in the past, so I guess I'll also survive the future pop trend of these days.

Over here in Europe they often call Suicide Commando as the "last EBM dinosaur" and maybe they're right. I grew up with the so called EBM movement back in the eighties, it had a major impact on me and the sound of Suicide Commando and I still feel related to it, just trying to be a more modern version of it.

IN: Suicide Commando has been close to the textbook definition of minimal EBM for years. However, your most recent works have become increasingly melodic. Is this a reflection of the scene around you or just a maturation of your own musical leanings?

Johan: I guess both. I've always been a huge fan of the old Klinik from the eighties and with the "construct-destruct" album I delivered an album that couldn't been closer to the sound of the old Klinik, so when I started working on the *Mindstrip* album I didn't want to copy myself once more, so I tried to move into another direction, a more melodic and danceable direction, but still being faithful to my roots. I think one can still hear those typical suicide commando sounds, sequences and distorted drums from the past, only this time I tried to combine them with more modern and technoid sounds which made the whole more danceable. Personally I more see it as a normal evolution of my works.

IN: Throughout Suicide Commandos tenure, the use of samples has been laid down pretty thick. Yet as years pass it seems the scene has been more and more critical of its usage. What do you feel these samples add to your music? Do you feel that they have a permanent home in future releases?

Johan: I always liked using samples, more specific vocal samples, just like with my vocals I try to use these samples more as an instrument. For me a good vocal sample is as important as a

good bass drum and definitely a must on my future releases.

IN: With your new album yet to be titled, you've stated that you want to take it slow by recording one track a month. How do you expect to keep a feeling of continuity if the writing/recording process is spread out that far?

Johan: One month for one song actually is nothing if you realize that I still have to work 5 days a week. So this might seem like a long period, but actually it isn't. It's even very short if you translate it into working hours! Many people seem to forget that.

IN: What happened to your tape label C0de Productions? Is it still releasing material?

Johan: No, I unfortunately had to stop these activities due to my lack of time. It was one of the sacrifices I had to make because suicide commando was taking too much of my free time. However I didn't stop completely. I started a collaboration with the new german label Dying Culture for whom I do some free lance artist managing (hunting for promising new bands) and compiling samplers (like the "high voltage 3" sampler)

SUICIDE COMMANDO



IN: Where could an aspiring young band [cough] send a demo for you to give a listen?

Johan: They always can get in touch with me at
info@suicidecommando.be

IN: How do you go about hunting for promising bands? What attributes do you believe are paramount in terms of a possible "developing talent"?

Johan: From all the demo's I get in I pretty fast can say if they have any talent or not. You can hear pretty fast if these bands are talented when they have good ideas, structures, feelings. Unfortunately a lot of the material I get in is useless, mainly because most bands don't take the time to grow and mature which I think is very important. It takes time to grow and mature, to create an own identity or sound.

IN: Are there any bands out there that we should keep a close eye on?

Johan: Some new names to remember definitely are Dioxyde from Spain, Aslan Faction and Tactical Sekt from the U.K., Grendel from Holland, all very close to suicidecommando without being a copy though.

IN: With your experiences with COde, how was working with a tape label different than an actual CD label? In what respects were the two formats different?

Johan: I've always been a big fan of the tape scene as it was an easy and cheap way to reach a lot of people all over the world, but unfortunately the tape scene disappeared as it became too easy and cheap to release cd's these days. I always found the tape scene as the ideal learning school for an artist. Nowadays it became too easy to release cd's, so there's no guarantee anymore for quality. 10 years ago you had to be good to get a contract with a label, these days you buy a synth and 3 weeks later you can release your first CD.

IN: Do you feel that there has been an influx of "musicians" in the past few years due to the increasing affordability of home studios and their often pirated soft synths? And to what extent do you think it adds to the dilution of the music scene?

Johan: Sure there has been an influx but I don't see that as a problem, because I'm sure that amongst these are also good musicians, so I don't think the amount of bands is a problem, the problem is that a lot of these bands don't take the time to grow and mature and just want to release their material too fast which brings a lot of quantity, but unfortunately less quality.

IN: Many of your peers and labels have been panicking over the recent explosion of mp3 file sharing. I am sure you understand where they are all coming from, but to

what extent do you share their worries?

Johan: I completely understand their worries and I'm fully aware of the danger of this problem. I have nothing against mp3 files in itself, just as long as they're used for the right reasons. We even have some mp3 files on our own website at www.suicidecommando.be including some exclusive material. I even think it's a good way to present your music to people who don't know your music yet, this way they can listen to the file(s) and then they can make up their mind. But where's the limit? Our previous *Mindstrip* album was already completely downloadable from the net before it even got into the record stores. This is ridiculous and is definitely damaging the labels, but also the artists who see their sales go down drastically, get less money for their hard work.

This probably is not such a big problem for major acts who are selling thousands of cd's, but for smaller bands and for small scenes like ours, this certainly makes a big difference.

IN: Now that the popular Audiogalaxy is shut down, is there a feeling of relief in the air, or do you believe a new program is bound to come along and take off running where both Napster and AG left off?

Johan: There are already other companies like Kazaa offering free downloads, so I don't see any improvement so far.

IN: Although it is clear that the artists are on the losing

end of the stick, it appears that the devoted fan-bases are really the ones that benefit since the music industry is turning to tours and better merchandising to make up for any losses in cd sales. Do you feel that the presentation of your music and merchandise need to be stronger? When you released the *Mindstrip* Collector's Boxset, did you have the losses due to online piracy in mind?

Johan: We're having a good merchandise deal with the german EMSO label who's doing all our merchandise for the moment, furthermore we're also working with one of the best booking agencies around (Pluswelt), so I'm pretty satisfied with that. With the *Mindstrip* limited boxset we didn't really think about the online piracy at that time, we just wanted to release something special for our most devoted fans. With the growing online piracy it in the mean time became more interesting to release special packaging and stuff, so it definitely became an advantage to release special items, limited boxes.

IN: Do you plan on utilizing copy protection as well on future releases?

Johan: I Don't know, you should ask my label about this. I'm not against the use of copy protection, but I doubt if it will solve the problem.

IN: Why hasn't Suicide Commando made the flight over the Atlantic? Is it due to your full time job responsibilities? Or are the schematic of a North American Tour simply not realistic for SC given your fear of flying?

Johan: Major reason why we didn't tour the U.S. yet is certainly our lack of time and my job responsibilities and restrictions. You have to understand that if you want to tour the U.S. you already need at least 2 weeks off from work, and of course that's not that simple. Besides that I'm not that fond of flying, but I heard from many other artists/friends (VAC, Hocico, Noisex) that they are afraid of flying, so I guess I'm not the only one with this problem.

However, as soon as I can combine things with my job, we're coming over, so be prepared!

IN: Are there any hopes for one in the near future?

Johan: Sure, we're working on a schedule for 2003 so we definitely hope that things will work out.

IN: Over the past years SC has evolved from a small project to a festival headliner. What can we look forward to from Suicide Commando in the future?

Johan: Well, I now first will concentrate on the new album which I hope to get ready by the beginning of next year (April). After that we'll first do a new European tour (April/May) and after that we finally hope to come over to the U.S. (July/August). Before (February) we probably will release a new single, and perhaps we even will do some kind of "best of" album (still end of this year). We'll see!

For more information on Suicide Commando please visit the official Suicide Commando website at:

www.suicidecommando.be

<http://www.IndustrialNation.com>

in@ripco.com

Alec Empire

Interviewed by Rick Kinney

Alec Empire is fucking great. He founded Atari Teenage Riot, and without him Digital Hardcore would be nothing. Sure, you can say that his hardcore music is undeniably male, and that he's about the 800th person to do a song called "New World Order". However, his solo album, *The Destroyer*, gave birth to the idea of hardcore jungle. He started a genre almost from scratch. What the fuck have you done to compare to that?

I was supposed to receive Alec Empire's latest album *Intelligence and Sacrifice* in the mail before this interview, but I never did. Alec was a trooper, though. He was kind enough to suffer through my ignorant questions without complaint. He is a very charming person to talk to on the phone, although that might not come out while reading this story. When Alec talks about the quality of his music, he doesn't sound like he's bragging. He sounds sincerely excited about it, and not arrogant as some of the words might suggest without hearing it straight from his mouth.

Alec's got a great accent too. He's retained that uniquely German phraseology in his conversation. We've had to edit out certain repeating phrases or else the article would be twice as long. So after every sentence add "to be honest" and/or "or something", and you'll have a good idea of what it's like to talk to him on the phone.

IN: I'm afraid my copy of *Intelligence and Sacrifice*, never arrived in the mail. But, I was able to download some of the MP3s from WinMX... I hope you're ok with that.

AE: Yeah, that's alright to get an idea about the record. I just think that you should listen to the actual record and listen to it to get a better idea of what I'm trying to say.

IN: One of the tracks that I downloaded was "New World Order"... what a fantastic ending to that track! Have you ever thought about putting out a noise record?

AE: That ending was actually done by Elias of Atari Teenage Riot. It's the ending of the first disc, which is more heavy. The second disc is very electronic instrumental stuff without guitars and not very noisy. So she was responsible for that world war scenario... that's how the first CD ends... with that noise. But yeah, maybe I should do a noise record at some point.

IN: Did I read that you worked with someone from Merzbow? With Masami Akita?

AE: Yeah, I've worked with him many times. We did a lot of shows together in Germany and Japan. We played like three times, four times. He played for my new record. He was a drummer for all the Japanese shows that we've done, which is very rare that he would play drums! He did that when he was a teenager in some death metal band. And he said "I'll just do that for you!" It was great! We made a live recording over at CBGB's in New York in 1998. We want to release that at some point in the next month. It was me on turntables, and Merzbow doing like you know... noise... stuff. It was a very good live recording.

IN: The one track I wasn't able to download was "Everything Begins With A Fuck".

AE: "Everything STARTS with a Fuck!"

IN: Right, right, sorry. What a great title! Can you tell me about that track?

AE: Hard guitars, almost like... maybe the terms I use don't make a lot of sense to you, but it's real metal. Very hard guitars, very hard beats. It's like heavy screaming stuff. It's one of the most brutal tracks on the record. And also the right message! You should hear that, I think you'd be really into it. A lot of people say it's one of the best tracks on the record.

IN: You did a record of some Elvis Presley remixes, right?

AE: [laughter] How did you hear about that? There's something of a misunderstanding. I didn't release that record. I did do the recordings, but it ended up being a bootleg. In 1998, for two weeks I was watching all Elvis movies in a row. I wasn't really into Elvis before, and to be honest I'm still not. I thought I have to spend some time with this phenomenon! I have to check it out in an intense way! So I watched all of those movies. I don't know if you've watched those movies, but it's real torture, some of them. Unbelievable. Sometimes when something is on TV, and you watch [for] 20 minutes, it doesn't do any harm. But if you watch everything at once, it's pretty crazy. So I listened to a lot of his records also and I thought to make the music based on his singing, and the weird lines that he's saying in his movies. I made these tracks, and then I went to Australia on tour with Atari Teenage Riot. And a guy I knew, DJ ToeCutter, he loved that stuff so much, he asked if he could have a copy of the CD-R. And I said "OK, you can copy it, but don't copy it to anybody else!" He copied it and copied it. And then I saw a vinyl [version] in a record store

in New York at some point. I think that's great, but I never got paid for that. Have you heard the whole thing?

IN: No, I just heard that one "Fight you punk" track, but I thought that was brilliant! I was just wondering if you had to get the rights from the Elvis estate or something.

AE: No, no, no. The funny thing about that bootleg vinyl is on the back there is a message that says all the income from this record goes to Scientology and the Presley family foundation or something like that. So, they made a good joke out of it! They even put a address "For Further Information contact" and then they wrote some Chicago address actually, and I think it was the private address of Louis Farrakhan! Which was absolutely insane. I thought that they had done a good job, actually. But, I had to buy the bootleg for 20 dollars! Can you believe that?

IN: Do you know of any other bootleg stuff that people have done?

AE: Yeah, sometimes people do CDs of something, compile stuff from my CDs, and it will have a variation of the artwork. I guess. Whatever. But, sometimes I get angry fans that say "Hey, I bought this and it says that this remix blah-blah-blah is on it, and it isn't." And I say to them "That's not really my record. That's out of my control."

IN: When you're writing music, do you ever start out a track in one style, and then decide as you're making it that it needs to be in a different style?

AE: Ummmm, no, not really. I think about everything beforehand. I really think about what I want to say. Certain lyrics, I'll have the idea first, and I'll think "OK, how should that sound?" What would be the best sound for this line. That's really how I do things. I think about it beforehand, and then I can lay it down. Very rarely do I start something and think it's going in the wrong direction, and then it morphs into something else. I know what I want to do very well when I start recording. And I've set up all of my equipment in the studio in a way where I can do all of that stuff. Basically I record so I can get the energy of it. For me, that's the most important part. The technology doesn't hold up the energy. I think with a lot of electronic music, people are almost like slaves to the equipment. I think it doesn't sound as

raw or powerful than when you do it the other way around. If you make the machines sweat, and you put yourself above your equipment and treat it like a slave. It's a different approach. I don't have much respect for the technolo-

gy. And that's a bit of a contradiction to many other people in the electronic music scene that follow that sort of Kraftwerk philosophy. "I am the human and I put myself below the technology. I see technology as the guiding light at the end of a dark tunnel... blah, blah, blah." I have a much more rock and roll punk approach. I don't see it like Kraftwerk or these other guys.

IN: You're on tour, right now. And you're doing the more aggressive songs from the rock side of *Intelligence and Sacrifice*?



Photo by Herve Baudat

AE: Yeah. This tour is very aggressive. Very hard. The shows have been very intense with real drums and guitars and stuff onstage. Very heavy. We had some complaints already from some ATR fans who were like "This shit is get-

ting WAY too heavy. Alec!" But, that's my direction, so fuck it. But, it's good and it has been really intense. We've done many festivals in Europe over the summer. The crowd is really growing. It's a new audience also over here in Europe. I hope when we reach the US next year, it will be the same thing with a lot of new people coming to see us, and not only ATR fans. I think it will be the same. Because in Japan where we've toured a lot and in Europe it was like that.

IN: How's your voice holding up?

AE: Good! Very good. I'm warming it up every day! I avoid chain smokers! [laughter] Now I have to do the whole show with my voice. Over an hour of intense straining and sweating and stuff like that. It's good, because it totally works.

IN: How long does it take to recover after a tour like you're doing now?

AE: How do I recover?

IN: How long does it take? Does it take a while?

AE: Actually, no. I try to stay fit during the tours. With ATR I always got very fucked up, but now I've got a strategy to not lose my voice! I don't want to spend months in recovery—I just want to keep going, play more and more shows and record more stuff. I'm in very good condition. When I recorded the new record I spent almost one and a half years doing that. I did also a lot of remixes in that time. But, they gave me enough time to get my energies together again, and I've come back stronger than before. I'm ready! For the next 2 or 3 years. There's no question about stopping now.

IN: So it took a year and a half to record *Intelligence and Sacrifice*?

AE: Yeah, but it's like a double cd that's full of stuff.

IN: In the middle of recording *Intelligence and Sacrifice* was September 11th, wasn't it?

AE: No, I actually finished the record in August last year. Then we were playing Japan at a festival at Nomi Fuji. I had to get a live line-up together very fast. We had booked the show, and it took me a few months longer to do the artwork and everything for the record and I forgot that we had this show booked. But, it was like 30,000 people. That was when I called Charlie Clouser from NIN and he came over and did synthesizer and sampler stuff. And Merzbow played drums. So, we got this band together, and it really kicked ass. I mean everybody went absolutely crazy. It was good because I was coming out of the studio after one and a half years. I went onstage and after the second song I was like "Wait a minute. Nobody knows these songs yet!" But, they were going completely crazy for them. It gave me a lot of confidence because it was good, and we could see that it would work out well straight away without people knowing the songs. Sometimes when you play new songs, people just stand there and check it out. Then I came back to Berlin, and that was a really bad time. That was when I heard about Carl Crack's suicide. That was like a big shock. And then only a few days later, September 11th happened. For me I thought, "What is going on?" That week it felt like everything was falling apart. It was a nightmare. For many other people, it was much worse. It was a hard time. We pushed the release back into the new year over here in Europe and Japan. And in America, we wanted to give it a bit more

time an approach it properly and set everything up properly. It looks like we're going to come over at the end of the year to do some shows. And then do longer touring in the beginning of next year. A Japanese person who saw the live show in Mt. Fuji told me that for them it was like my show was like a vision of what was to come on September 11th. We did the "New World Order" song with all the noise at the end, but it was much more intense live with all of these people adding their energy onto it. It was kind of scary they said, that this show happened a couple weeks before 9/11.

IN: Do you think that if you were still working on the record during 9/11, that it would have made it a different record?

AE: No, I don't think so. No, I saw the danger for a long time in all that stuff. Like many of things we've been saying in ATR. People were always going, "Come on, you're being too negative." Europe for example, terrorism has been always present since the second world war. We live much nearer to Afghanistan and Iraq and all those countries. We know what's been cooking down there. I think sometimes with George Bush's politics, the way he behaves internationally... I don't know how people see it in America, but it's not very diplomatic! I don't know that he is the right president, to be honest, to deal with these kind of problems at the moment. He just seems to heat up things even more. People are just getting more angry. In Europe at the moment, anti-americanism is growing so much because of that president. I kept saying that I've been to America many times and I've met a lot of people who think TOTALLY differently! And they are not like Bush. But many people never really see that. In the mainstream you don't see that. You never hear criticism for Britney Spears or Jennifer Lopez or those kind of people, which is mostly what comes over here. McDonalds and that kind of shit. So, it's dangerous. I don't think I would've made the record in a different way, but it has become very much a record of the time now. It deals with that kind of escalation of violence. If you know the whole record, there's a song called "Path of Destruction" that's how the record starts, and that song is about the escalation of violence. It's my sort of comment that's different from my stuff with Atari Teenage Riot. I felt that I had to make that kind of statement. With ATR, we always took sides. With my own stuff like *Intelligence and Sacrifice* I don't really take sides. A song like "Path of Destruction" is about that process, more power and just escalates until it ends with New World Order with that total destruction at the end. At the time when I wrote it, it was almost like a nightmare vision of the future. I think we've entered that completely now. There doesn't seem to be any end of this if we continue down that path. That's what the record is about. But, not only that! There are a lot of other issues on the record. Not too political, it's not like an ATR record in that way.

IN: There was an election on Sunday in Germany, wasn't there?

AE: Yeah.

IN: Did you vote in that election?

AE: No. Actually, I moved my residence to England years ago so I can't take part in the elections. It would have been a good question if I had voted for anyone there. It's very hard to make a decision in Germany, because it seems as if the corporations rule on a global level. They

make the decisions. If they want a change in government, they'll make it happen. A lot of people feel very frustrated with politicians and the corruption and all the lies. It seems like there's nothing you can really do anymore. They just support this rotten economy instead of the people. I think in America it's kind of the same thing. I think that it's good that Schröder and the Green Party [will] continue for 4 more years. But, I don't know if even that will achieve the kind of changes that they wanted 4 years ago. They had all these plans. But they couldn't even put them to reality because the corporations were putting so much pressure on.

IN: I wanted to go back to Carl Crack who, just mentioned. Were there any charitable organizations set up where people can donate money to a mental health organization in Carl's name?

AE: No, but I think it would be a good idea. His family would think that would be a great thing. It was a big shock for us. Carl and I were writing letters to each other. At the time we really wanted to take the pressure off of him. He said he wanted to do this therapy and get really well. The last letter that I got two months before he killed himself he was so positive! It was very good to see him making such progress. It was just a big shock.

IN: Will Carl's solo LP, *Black Ark*, be re-released anytime soon?

AE: Yeah, we got a lot of requests about that. A lot of people say it is a great recording, and I think it is. It is very deep, to it album in a way. You can really see his side. In ATR you see the angry side of him, very aggressive kind of stuff. Most of the time though, he had that kind of *Black Ark* vibe. Deep, dark, but a more quiet, sensitive side of him. I don't know yet. Maybe we should do that, because we get more and more requests. It seems that a lot more people want it now. At the time it was more like a limited kind of thing. Maybe we should do that. It's a good idea, but we really haven't thought about that yet. We will release an ATR rarities compilation that was scheduled for last year, but we put it back until the end of this year because it felt kind of weird to put a record like this after he died. It almost seemed like we wanted to exploit that financially. I'm not really re-releasing stuff like that very fast. I have this weird feeling that people might interpret it the wrong way. The music should be out there.

IN: One last question, I was looking at some of your press pictures from this new album online. And my wife came up behind me and said, "Oh my god, why are you looking at pictures of Trent Reznor?" And I said, "No, no, no. That's not Trent! Look at his face!"

AE: [laughter]

IN: That's not Trent, is it?

AE: You see, Trent, when he cut his hair that was for the last album. He was really into ATR at the time. I have had this same haircut for ten years! Through all the records! And Trent hasn't! It's not me. When they had the cover story in, I think it was, Alternative Press or maybe Spin, a guy bodied me like a magazine when it came out in 99 and said "Look! You're on the cover!" And I thought for a split-second that it was me. I couldn't believe it. But whatever. But Trent gave us a lot of credit in the press over here and stuff. He said Atari was really important for them [and] for *The Fragile*. So it's ok!

Conjure One is the much anticipated solo release from international producer/artist Rhys Fulber. For more than 10 years, as one half of the groundbreaking electro-industrial units Front Line Assembly and Delerium, many of his releases became what some consider to be industrial 'classics.' Many of these albums mark not only the artist's personal growth but are definitive examples of the evolution of the industrial sound in general. Like all true artists, Rhys Fulber is constantly reinventing himself and his music. From his work as a producer (Fear Factory, Paradise Lost) to his songwriting skills on Delerium's *Silence*, Rhys continues to show fans how incredibly diverse he really is. 2002 finds Rhys finally releasing *Conjure One* after nearly 4 years in the making. This self-titled album is a combination of Fulber's considerable studio skills and a unique palette of 'world' sounds collected during nearly 3 years of globe trotting. I phoned the underground electronic icon at his Los Angeles home early one Saturday morning.

conjure

Interview by Seth McDonald

IN: Are you as excited as I am about a 10:30 AM interview?

Fulber: Is it too early for you?

IN: [laughs] No, it's alright.

Fulber: I get up really early...

IN: So it's the middle of your day then?

Fulber: Not quite, but yeah, I'm an early riser so I like doing this kind of stuff in the morning.

IN: Going from the Front Line sound to the Delerium sound seems kind of a big jump...

Fulber: Really? I don't think it was. We still made the records the same way. It's just different sounds, you know? Different samples, different synth patches. The tracks were made, well, they didn't have like the intros and the big long breaks, it was more of a pop structure. But, to me, it wasn't really that different.

IN: Did you use the same approaches and methods, just different sounds?

Fulber: In a way because any time I worked with Bill Leeb (Front Line Assembly/Delerium) we had a way of working. The way I do my own stuff is different though. It's a different way of putting stuff together. With me and Bill we kind of, well, I wouldn't say it was formulated, we just kind of had a way of getting stuff done and when I work on my own I work in a really kind of different way. It's a little more, well, just all over the place. Things start differently. I don't know how to describe it — it's just a different way of working.

IN: What do you mean? Did you and Bill have duties? Like someone would do bass lines and someone else would do drums?

Fulber: Yeah, kind of. Bill would usually have some kind of idea for a tune and I would kind of put it together for him. He would always play the bass lines and I'd play all the chords. I did all the programming and stuff. So we had a way of doing it. My own stuff starts differently. With

Delerium we started a lot of songs with samples. A lot of stuff on my record I didn't start like that. I'd start with, say, just a piano melody. So it's just a different way of building up the tunes. I think on this record I was trying to rely more on riffs and melodies whereas with other stuff we did in the past it was more of a vibe and atmosphere.

IN: What are the big differences between Delerium and Conjure One?

Fulber: I think Conjure One has a little more variation. It's got a little more of an edge and I think it is more "poppy." I didn't want to make a record just like Delerium. I had a lot to do with the way those Delerium records sounded so it's inevitable that some of that's going to be with me still. I want it to be different and I think when I get to the next album it's gonna be more different. I used to think that it was really different and now I look back and go "I think, to the average person, it's gonna be not that far away from one another." The original plan I had for Conjure One was to make it kind of heavier like the song "Redemption." Are you familiar with that track on the album?

IN: Yeah.

Fulber: That was the first song I did for the record.

IN: That's the most extreme track on that album.

Fulber: That's the first tune I did in 1998. It's the first tune I put together and that was what I wanted to do. I wanted to make it hard hip-hop beats with heavy bass and a sort of Turkish feel on top. That was the initial template for how it was supposed to sound. Then things just kind of went a whole bunch of different directions. The songs "Redemption" and "Pandora" were the way I initially had the project to sound in my mind. Then I kind of got some 'poppy' tunes in there and everything started moving around a little bit and changing. Initially I started using a lot more live instruments. I sort of had this direction in mind, but it's just because I was working as a producer and doing remixes at the same time that just made everything take a long time. At the end of the process I had problems clearing a couple samples and when you have a lot of guest vocalists you have to have all these contracts and deals with everyone sorted out. All of the logistical stuff took at least a year. That's why the record kept getting delayed. It wasn't because of the music; it was because of business stuff. That was kind of frustrating. I had to keep replacing samples. It was quite a haul.

IN: It seems like most of the Front Line Assembly beats were made with either synthesized or preset drum sounds but Conjure One has more of an urban feel. More like sampled breakbeats instead of an electro sound on the drums. In what

ways has your technical approaches and methods changed?

Fulber: The way I program beats now is different.

IN: In what way?

Fulber: I do it more on the computer. I use live drums and percussion a lot as well. To be honest, I think, in some ways, I was a bit of a guinea pig for Nettwerk and Bill because I was working on my record before they made *Poem* [Delerium's first record without Fulber] and then they started putting lots of live instruments on *Poem* with the people I had done it with. I think they were seeing how it would work out because we never really thought about doing stuff like that when I was in Delerium. I think they kind of watched how I did this stuff and thought "Hey that's pretty cool" and then did the same thing. I

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Photos: Krista Clarke

started in '98 so there were demos lying around everywhere for ages. I got live drums in there really early and then we chopped them up in the computer. I just wanted to get stuff that's got a little more groove and feel, a little more natural feeling. I wanted to get away from all the real stoic electronic stuff even though there's still some of that in there. I'm already working on another record because, like I said, most of the material on this record is kind of old for me anyway. I've already started working on new things that I think are gonna go more in to live instruments, less synthetic. I've been playing with synthesizers for a long time. I don't even use that many of them anymore. I just use my computer and go in to studios and record bits, bring it back on the computer and manipulate it. You just kind of get tired of doing stuff a certain way and you just want to find different ways to put stuff together. I work with a bunch of people now who are really good musicians and you just learn from all the years of experience. You just learn how to put things together better. I couldn't have made this record 5 years ago, there's no way.

IN: Speaking of the musicians, how involved were Tom, Rick, and Dido?

Fulber: Well, Rick Nowels actually co-wrote 2 of the tunes on the record. Basically, I had a bunch of songs that I had written and I was having problems finding vocalists and people to write parts so my manager hooked me up with some songwriters. Pop songwriters like this guy named Billy Steinberg who has written for loads of people, household tunes such as "Like A Virgin." I was really surprised that he liked what I was doing in the first place and we got together and got along really well. We wrote a couple of tunes together. He works with Rick Nowels a lot so I met Rick through him. They had this tune they both wrote — the "Tears From the Moon" tune and the song "Sleep." They played me these songs and I went "Man, these are great tunes and I would really love to cut versions of these." That's how the relationship started. It started out with the song "Sleep" and then later on "Tears From the Moon" came up. I was initially gonna do it with Bill for the new Delerium record, but Bill kind of wasn't that into the song or something. I worked on it with Rick. I like working with people like that because I learn so much off of them. These people are total pros. They've been doing it a long time and they know how to make records. I learn from them. For me it's just all a way for me to get better. That's how that whole thing happened. Then, Billy Steinberg's publishing person put the Sinead O'Connor thing together. He had Sinead lined up to sing the tune. I did-

n't have any list of vocalists or anything, it just all happened. It was all just weird little coincidental things. "Center of the Sun," I think, is one of the best things I've ever done. That song, I really, really like it. I'm really proud of that one.

IN: Why did you choose to use real string arrangements instead of keyboard string patches?

Fulber: I was working with a guy named Chris Elliot who is a string arranger. He does a lot of stuff for film and television work in England. He was a friend of a friend and I hooked up with him and we became good friends. He sent me these arrangements he did just with just samples, like the multisamples that you can get. The passion and the emotion just comes out with real string sections. You can't get that with samples. It's just impossible. Like the song "Pandora" has those bending strings. You wouldn't be able to get it the same way with samples. It's expensive as hell and that's the one hold up, but it's worth it. I mean, some of the tunes have sampled strings on them as well, but the main arrangement songs have the live strings. Again, it just sounds awesome. There's no way you can replicate it, I mean you can get close for certain things. Especially if it's behind a rock band or something, but when you got it right up front like that it's so much better with

the real deal.

IN: What inspired you to make that an upfront sound?

Fulber: I don't know. It's just the way I would write the songs. The songs would all have these big riffs in the middle of them. Like I said before, I was trying to base the tunes around riffs and melodies more than loops and samples. There are still some loops and samples in there but, for the most part, I was trying to make it more with the melodies up front. I would write all the basic melodies and then give it to Chris Elliot and he would arrange string parts and accentuate the melodies. It just makes it kind of alive.

IN: What are you listening to right now?

Fulber: Man, I listen to all kinds of weird stuff. I've been listening to all kinds of records I used to listen to when I was a kid. Punk rock records, like Buzzcocks and stuff like that. I love a band called Doves. They're one of my favorites. I love the new Coldplay record. There's this new band on Atlantic Records called The Fates that I really like. It's kind of pop-rock but it's really melancholy. I did an album with an English band called Paradise Lost. I really like that stuff as well. I'm really pleased with that. I just finished it like a week ago. I like Sasha's album a lot. I was actually around for a little bit of that when I was in

Amsterdam because Tom Holkenburg (Junkie XL) was working on the record. They had like 3 rooms set up with different people working on stuff. It was this big operation. I really like that record. Most of the stuff I end up listening to is stuff I'm working on so it goes all over the place. Usually I listen to music in my car so those are the kind of discs I've been listening to in the car. Changing between the Buzzcocks to Sasha to Doves. [laughs] All over the place.

IN: Kind of diverse.

Fulber: Yeah, well, I like all kinds of music. I can listen to almost anything and find something good in it. I'm not really interested in R&B and I don't like hip-hop anymore. I used to love hip-hop but the new stuff is just kind of boring. I listen to a lot of old records, like stuff I used to like when I was 11 [laughs]. Just revisiting it and going "Man, this really sounds good." I don't listen to too much electronic music lately, actually.

IN: Oh yeah?

Fulber: Yeah. Well, I like the new Sasha record. I bought the new Future Sound of London but I haven't even made it past track 3. I don't even like it that much. Other than that I've been listening to Mogwai. You ever heard of them?

IN: No

Fulber: Scottish band. They're kind of like an ambient guitar band. Oh, and I forgot to say one of my favorites is Craig Armstrong. You should check out both of his albums. They're awesome. His new album and his previous album are both killer. I listen to those a lot. How could I forget that?

IN: Being an electronic musician what do you think of the current state of industrial?

Fulber: Well, industrial music bores me completely. I don't mean to sound like a dick but I just can't listen to it. It just bores me. I'm like "show me something new, guys." It's all Front 242/Skinny Puppy still. Nothing's changed. You know what I mean?

IN: Yeah, for like 10 years.

Fulber: I don't mind some of the Haujobb stuff... some of that stuff I hear and go "This is pretty cool, I like some of this stuff." But it still reminds me of Skinny Puppy for some reason. I think it's the way they do the vocals. I was into that stuff in the 80s. It just was fresher then. Now it sounds kind of dated. I guess you could say that about a lot of things but it just doesn't excite me anymore. I don't get the same thrill when I listen to that kind of music that I did like 13 years ago. Even when I was in Front Line, by about 1992 I kind of stopped listening to that music completely. By 1992 I was more into dance stuff. When the first wave of trance hit and all that... I was kind of more into that. Then there was the ambient stuff like Autechre and Aphex Twin. I've been kind of away from that thing for a long time. Sometimes I'll go on to an internet radio and just listen to what the stuff is. There is something about VNV Nation that

I don't mind. I think because it's sort of melodic and really euro-sounding, it's sort of OK. But most of it I just can't get into anymore. I'm more into different stuff. I mean, I know it's an industrial magazine. I don't want to sound like an asshole but I'm just being honest. I prefer to listen to like the new Coldplay record and get off on the songs. I'm more into songwriting and a lot of industrial records don't really have super brilliant tunes. I want to expand my skills as a songwriter. You do that by listening to killer songs and learning from people. I'm always looking for a great chord progression in there. We've written all these minor chord progressions every which way around for years and I want to get away from that. That's why I listen to more of this kind of stuff because it touches me more.

IN: What do you find more challenging? Pop song structure or making layered droning?

Fulber: Oh man, songwriting is hard. It's not easy. If it was easy there would be more great songwriting bands. It seems easy and I know a lot of people from that industrial crowd would always say "Oh, yeah that's crap," but songwriting is a really hard thing to do. When I listen to the new Coldplay record it sounds really simple but you try writing one of those tunes. That's the genius of it. You get something that's simple but has a depth to it. Songwriting is really not easy. That's why there are not really that many long-term successful pop writers, because it's not that easy. I'm published by Zomba which is the jive label which puts out all the really teen-pop records. Why do you think there's only, like, 5 guys who write for all those artists? Because it ain't easy. I mean, you can slag off Backstreet Boys till the end of time but try writing one of those tunes; it's not easy to write something people can pick up on like that. I can make ambient layers and drones till the end of time. I like that stuff as well, but songwriting is the big challenge. That's what I tried to do on my record. I'm into songs. That's what gets me off. I think this record is really true to what I want to do, what I like. I couldn't make an industrial record now, it wouldn't come from the heart.

IN: You've always been big on samples. Even the Pantera sampling in the later FLA stuff. How much processing does a sample go through to become part of one of your songs?

Fulber: Everything is totally tweaked. That's kind of where I got myself in to some trouble because I was clearing [all the samples used]. Some of it was so manipulated that I probably wouldn't have even had to have done it but I did it anyway and it got me into a bit of trouble because I had to change a few things. Yeah, but everything is definitely tweaked, changed in pitch. The only song where the samples aren't altered that much is the song called "Pandora." There are these Albanian folk-music samples on it. I heard them on some disc and they just sounded fucking miserable. I loved it. I thought that I should make a tune around it. So those samples are fairly true, but the rest of them are all kind of sliced and diced, reversed and things like that.

IN: You're on the PowerBook now, right?

Fulber: Yeah, I'm gonna get another studio computer, though, because my studio computer is old so I've just been using my PowerBook right now.

couldn't get further away from Fear Factory than Josh Groban. I think I'm going to play keyboards for him on his PBS special at the beginning of October.

IN: No way [laughs].

Fulber: He called me and asked me "Do you want to be a featured performer [on my PBS special]?" He toured with Sarah Brightman so you know the kind of crowd. It was through that big producer David Foster. They liked the Delerium record *Karma* so that's how I got involved with them. I just kind of brought that thing to the record and they loved it.

IN: So you're going to

be on PBS?

Fulber: Playing keyboards with Josh Groban. With tattoos with all these people in tuxedos [laughs]. It's gonna be awesome. I think I'm going to do it just because I think it would be a laugh, you know... and I like Josh. He's a really good kid as well.

IN: I read in an early interview that you said that a Kraftwerk show inspired you?

Fulber: That's the first concert I ever remember seeing. It was the *Autobahn* tour and I was maybe 5 or 6. My parents were kind of into trippy music at the time. My Dad had a lot of Zappa. From, like, Led Zeppelin to Frank Zappa and then jazzy stuff like George Benson. We lived in Germany when I was really little and they had Kraftwerk records. That's how it all sort of came about. My dad had really good taste in music, basically.

IN: Were there any other like early electronic pioneer type artists that inspired you?

Fulber: When I was a kid I liked Jean Michael Jarre a lot. When I first heard that stuff I really vibed on that. It was like something you'd hear under school documentaries and stuff. *Oxygen* was one of those records you heard a million times and when I finally had the record I was "Oh, this is what this is, ok, I see." I used to really like this record by the singer of the Buzzcocks, Pete Shelly. He made this electronic album called *Homosapien* back in the day. I was like 11 or 12 when it came out. Back at that time I used to really like OMD as well. OMD were actually probably one of the biggest influences on me though I don't really talk about it too much for some reason. They were like my favorite band. *Architecture and Morality* was my favorite album for a really long time. I had a little crappy synthesizer and just learned all the tunes. That's probably where the string heavy vibe comes from. I was always really in to OMD and the way they always had the pads in the background. That was a huge influence for sure. Then after that I got in to all the really heavy industrial stuff like SPK and all that. I was pretty young when I got in to all this. By the time I was 15 I was already listening to some really obscure shit.

IN: Including all your production credits and remixing, what one piece of your music is your all time favorite?

Fulber: Oh, "Center Of the Sun," with Poe, the song on my album. I love it.

IN: Really?

Fulber: I think it's the best thing I've ever done. I was playing it on the piano and just kind of singing it to myself and thought "You know, this is a good song." You could just do it. Tori Amos

style and it would still be good. That, to me, is the indication of a good tune.

IN: That's your all time favorite?

Fulber: So far, yeah, I love it. When I listen to it, it makes me kind of go... [sighs]. There's some Delerium stuff that I think we've done good but I didn't have the same passion when I made those records that I do with my own records. Like when we made *Karma* we just put it together. It wasn't really like a master plan. Even for "Silence" — the song that everyone sort of knows us by now — there was no major thing behind it. We just did it. [Sarah McLachlan] came in and threw down a vocal and that was that.

IN: What was that like? She's notorious for being not so confident in the electronic world. How was it working with her?

Fulber: I didn't really work with her. I was really ill at the time. I set up the songs on the computers and samplers and passed out on the couch. Then she laid down a vocal. I had pneumonia. I was deathly ill. I was coughing up blood. It was horrible. I've never been so sick in my life. I still had to come to the studio because we were mixing. I had to set up all the songs because I was the one who ran the computers and samplers. I was just so ill that I hardly remember it. It felt like a big blur. Greg Reelly, the engineer, recorded her as she laid stuff down and that was it. None of us really gave her much direction or anything.

IN: Are you familiar with the CRTC's minimum required Canadian content law?

Fulber: Yeah, I think it sucks. I think it sucks because it lowers the standard of music.

IN: It didn't help you early in your career?

Fulber: Of course it did. They got *Semantic Spaces* and played the hell out of that stuff because of that. I think that sucks though. I want them to want to play it. I don't want them to play it because it's Canadian. I think that's weak. I think it takes away a lot of the competition. Why do you think so many original, unique, innovative bands come from England? Because the competition and the level of quality is so high that in order to get stuff through it's gotta be really cool. They don't have "English content" on the charts there. They just play what they play. It's the same thing in America. But maybe I shouldn't say it's a bad thing because it's probably paid for some of our videos. You really can't argue with that. I prefer doing things the hard way.

IN: How and when do you consider a song "finished"?

Fulber: I'm still figuring that one out.

IN: Do you fine-tune it forever?

Fulber: I did on this record. I really went over it. I went over it and then I kind of hit a wall. Then I went over some of the tunes with Tom and a couple of the people I work with down here. When you get another person in to the mix then you can tell when it's starting to get finished. When you're on your own sometimes it's tough. I don't know, you just know. Like, when I do remixes, I just tinker. I used to spend at least a week on every mix I do and just twiddle and twiddle. You just get to the point when you go "You know what... I think it's done." I'll hear stuff I did and I'm like "Oh, god, I could've done that, I could've done that..." Like the remix I have that's out now for that band POD — I'm not happy with it. It's so frustrating sometimes because they had someone mix it without me so the only way

I even heard it was by buying it at the store. The final mix is so frustrating in this business sometimes.

IN: So you do let stuff go out the door that later you kind of feel a little doubtful of?

Fulber: When you're dealing with major labels it's a different kind of beast. I have the same thing with the Josh Groban stuff. I did my thing and then they want you to hand in the parts. You don't really get paid until you hand in all the stuff and then it's almost like they do whatever the fuck they want with it. It's kind of frustrating because I'm not a mixer. If I was a mixer I'd mix it myself and hand it in finished but I don't think I'm a good enough mixer to do it to the standard that I want it at. I always have to have another mixer come and do the final mixdown. That's where these problems always arise. It's just all personal taste, too. Like, the engineer will make it sound good but it's not necessarily the way you want it to sound. That's the kinds of problems I have with some of these things. It's not like they sound like complete crap, it just doesn't sound how I wanted it



"You can slag off Backstreet Boys till the end of time but try writing one of those tunes; it's not easy to write something people can pick up on like that"

to sound. But on my own record I didn't have that problem. Everything's exactly perfect and the way I wanted it.

IN: You're just in love with this record, aren't you?

Fulber: Actually I'm kind of over it, to be honest. A lot of it sounds so old to me. I'm really happy with the way it came out. That's probably a better way of describing it. It's the first time where I've really had control over every little detail, from the artwork to the mastering to who's doing the remixes to everything. So I'm really pleased because it's coming out the way I wanted it to come out. The thing I like most about this album is that it did come out the way I wanted it, right down to the way it's mastered. Everything. So I'm really pleased with it but a lot of the music sounds so old to me. I've kind of moved on from it. Like I said, some of those tunes were written in 1998.

IN: What's the future hold for Conjure One?

Fulber: More cool music and maybe a tour. There's been rum-

blings of a tour. My view on the tour is "Hell, I'd love to do a tour." I haven't been on the road with a band for a long time. It would be a really complex affair because it's just me, I'd have to hire everybody, which basically means it would cost a lot of money. For me to be able to do it, I'd have to see how well the album did. If I put out the album and no one cares then it's gonna be like I would just be spending all my own money to go on tour. Since I make a living off of music, that would be kind of a rough thing to do to myself. Another thing is, I think certain fans of this genre of music don't understand that it is a business, unfortunately. It's now I make my living so I can't do something crazy like go out there and put together this big production when I'm not really selling albums. I'd be losing tons of my own money. I gotta live, I'd love to do a tour but I have to make sure that there's enough support out there to make it happen. We'd have to see how the record does and see if there'd be demand for it and whether the promoters would want to do it. I don't want to go out there and lose my shirt. I'd love to do it but it'd have to make sense otherwise

it'd be like suicide. That's what my managers told me. "If you wanna go out and blow your income for the next 5 years on a big tour, then be my guest." Then I might have to get a day job. Forget it.

There's a record release party here in LA on the twenty-third and I was initially gonna try and put together a little live set but it would be so much work for just like 20 minutes. If something goes wrong I'm gonna look like a total loser. The reason I say that [playing live] is gonna be so expensive is because I want to make it something. I don't want to just go up there with a MPC and a mixer, waving my arms around. I want to have something really cool and vibey. I remember when I was a kid I went and saw Severed Heads support Skinny Puppy around 1986 or something. I was into Severed Heads big time. I loved what they were doing — the *City Slab Horror* record and *Since the Accident* record... that was just so cool. Then I saw them live and that just killed it for me. There was just no vibe at all. They were really unfashionable, nerdy guys just touching the little keyboards. There was some little video screen. I love those guys, don't get me wrong, but when you're a teenager and you see that, you're like "uhhh..." The reason Skinny Puppy got popular was because of this big fucking rock show. They had the hair and they looked weird. It makes a difference, I'm telling you. It sounds corny but it's true. I'm still the same way now. If I go see a band, I like bands to look cool and have a cool show. I think it's important. It's part of the whole thing.

IN: Entertainment....

Fulber: Yeah, exactly. That's the reason why I have to wait and see for my tour because if I do a show I want to have musicians on stage. I want to have a visual production. I want it to be an experience. I don't want it to just be, like, 2 guys

and a keyboard. There's just not going to be any vibe

IN: Does that mean you'll be touring with a 23 piece string section?

Fulber: No, I'd probably just bring me and maybe 4 other people or something. I've kind of thought about it already. The other thing is that I want to try and play stuff live. I don't want to have it be all playback. What's the point? Just listen to the record. That's something I tried to do when I was in Front Line Assembly. I tried to make our live shows fairly live, by reorganizing the backing tracks and trying to play as much stuff as possible. I just don't see what the point is otherwise.

Visit Conjure One on the web:

www.conjureone.com

SEVERED HEADS

By Brian Clarkson



Severed Heads has been recording strange, demented pop songs made from assembled samples and other noises since 1979. Most people are probably familiar with the work that Severed Heads released on the Nettwerk label: albums like *Bad Mood Guy*, *Come Visit the Big Bigot*, the *Bulkhead* compilation, or the 'companion pieces' of *Since the Accident* and *City Slab Horror*. Later albums were released on Volition Records in Australia with some licensing done by (the now defunct) Decibel in the US. While the line up of the band has changed a few times, the major force behind the band remains Tom Ellard. Ultimately, Tom Ellard started his own CD-R-based record label, Sevcom, to handle the release and distribution of Severed Heads releases (and, in some cases, other projects such as CoCiaComa). So now, the entire Severed Heads catalog can be obtained through www.sevcom.com, the home page of the Sevcom label and official site for Severed Heads.

Industrialnation got a chance to bounce some e-mail onto Tom's computer screen and get the low-down on the current activities of both Sevcom and Severed Heads.

IN: When did Sevcom launch?

Tom Ellard: I mentioned it in 1988 when we did a compilation called *Bulkhead* on Nettwerk. The intention came long before any real motion, due to comfort. Motion came when our normal record label world fell apart in 1996, money owing, stupid demands for normalcy, etc. Out of the loop we had to go through some withdrawal pains but started to be independent again. It needed some advances in the tools as well. Computers and burners and suchlike.

IN: What gave you the inspiration to create a CD-R label?

Ellard: Having achieved as much commercial success as seemed likely (a top 20 single) and not being inspired to go down that path I wanted to revisit our earliest and in many ways happiest time, before our involvement with the music industry. The time seems right – compact discs are no longer an elite product,

the internet allows self-promotion. There is a stigma about handmade music, but once a comparison is drawn to the visual arts – the single canvas vs. the print – and even food, where home cooking beats fast food – the preconception is revealed.

It gives a whole new meaning to 'making music'. And Severed Heads is supposed to be about initial risks like e.g. the first MP3 album (actually MP2), live video onstage, home made CD-ROM...

IN: Since you mention that Severed Heads was originally about taking risks... Other than the obvious (i.e. self-promotion) what are the risks that Severed Heads/ Sevcom are tackling now?

Ellard: Some examples: playing live as Severed Heads usually means a headline gig and some back stage comforts. Playing live as CoCiaComa means on first and boo hiss get off. But that's where we learned the most and so that's where we have been for a year

or so. And then there's new mediums, like programmed video (www.scene.org), where there's no real rules established – and no Grammys. Out on the frontier is the place to be.

IN: What influenced the decision to recreate (remix/repackage) the Severed Heads backcatalog?

Ellard: I don't see the point of pretending to be naive. Rather than trying to re-make album 1, it's better to have album 1 available. So people that only like the early releases (we call them Cliffords) have that opportunity and not in the overpriced 'collectable' market either. Also of course there's an element of 'we did that a long time ago sonny'. We are lucky that we started to archive our music on digital tape since 1985 and so most material is in excellent condition. Remixing is only ever done to reconcile what we wanted to do at the time with any shortcomings – it's not to modernize the music.

IN: Are there any plans for new Severed Heads releases?

Ellard: Certainly, there is an album that has been code named *Lap Top Pop*, but now will actually be called *Op*. It is recorded, but to my mind is not well defined enough to be a release just yet. We have work in progress samples at www.laptoppop.com. It's a pop album, because I like to listen to pop albums, and that's the way you should go about making music. My idea of pop requires a bit more discord than is there at the moment.

IN: Is the current Severed Heads line-up just you, or are others involved in the creation of *Lap Top Pop* (or *Op*)?

planet as people recall our influence on current music. Hi Orbitall!

IN: What kinds of projects do you see being released by Sevcom in the future? Where do you see Sevcom in the future?

Ellard: I'd certainly see more visual material. The music side has been going for 20 years now and the re-issues are sufficient. I am very excited by the European 'demoscene', where young programmers show off their coding skills with real time video generation – that's a place that 'recording artists' haven't really explored. So, Sevcom would be more about an experience that you can download and enjoy on many levels, perhaps like a well crafted computer game. My programming skills are pretty feeble

Ellard: Hobbies? Shit, who has time for hobbies? I regularly work until late in the evening to keep up with all these stupid ideas.

IN: What keeps you (and Sevcom, going day-to-day)?

Ellard: Well, of course there's times when I think it's all a horrible failure. But I am more often surprised that a group from a suburban bedroom in Australia can get as far as it has, to travel the world, to be broadcast and initiated and meet a lot of good people. Severed Heads never held very high expectations or self opinions. We've been able to age gracefully too, something that kills a lot of bands. It's all about being happy at doing what you do, rather than angst about what you cannot.



Ellard: In my opinion four guys trying to make an LP is like four people trying to paint with the same paint brush at once. But there's a load of people involved in mixing the paint and hanging the canvas. Bitching about the colours...

IN: What other projects are you working on currently?

Ellard: A DVD of our videos would be great but will cost a bit to create, more re-issues of old albums are coming out, I have a feature film soundtrack coming up late in the year, and always maintaining our online community at www.sevcom.com – the Sevcom Pub. We've got a lot of licensing going on as well – Severed Heads are popping up on compilations around the

though.

IN: Does Sevcom keep you occupied full-time? How big of an operation is it currently?

Ellard: No, I work at an advertising agency part-time. Sevcom is now big enough that I don't have to work full-time, but it's not like the glory days where I could buy a house with the music. It's all about quality; I really don't give a damn if I don't outsell some mainstream act. I figure only a tiny percent of the population is worth talking to anyway. One person listening to an album beats a hundred playing it the back-ground.

IN: What keeps you busy (hobbies, etc) outside of Sevcom?

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Darlinghurst
1300 Australia

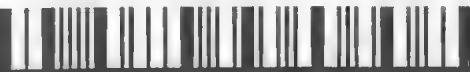
For more information on Tom Ellard and the Severed Heads check out:

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THE METHODS
OF BIO-TEK
OF RECORDING

135468367 30860



*Bio-Tek, from its inception, has been an EBM-laced fusion of horror, bondage, and the occult. The man behind it all, Jonathan Sharp conceived it in the mid-90s as a more evil receptacle for his twisted music designs than other projects he had going on concurrently — New Mind, Hexedene, Hyperdex-1-Sect, and a few others (Sharp rivals Bill Leeb for total number side-projects in a professional career). Appearing first on the scene with the albums *A God Ignored* is a *Demon Born* and *Darkness My Name Is*, both released on the seminal-yet-now-defunct Zoth Ommog Records, Bio-Tek swiftly made waves for being an EBM terrorfest replete with growly vocals, scorching beats, and horror movie samples. Later, shifting to Doppler Effect Records (fronted by Sonic Boom founder Jester), Bio-Tek has released two subsequent records: *Punishment for Decadence* and *Ceremony of Innocence*, the latter which was released this year. In the face of the scene's recent shift towards uplifting, trance-infused lovefests, Bio-Tek has stayed aggressively evil. Maintaining its hardline occult-and-horror-set-to-music stance, Bio-Tek has recently attacked such spooky subject matter as HP Lovecraft, Alister Crowley, and erm, Placebo (see the cover of "Pure Morning" on *Punishment for Decadence*). The following interview was conducted with Jonathan Sharp via email on Halloween.*

IN: What's the history of Bio-Tek? I know the project originally started out on Zoth Ommog.

Sharp: Like most projects I've done, it's got a long and confused history attached. It began in the early 90s as a sideline to [Sharp's main project New Mind], to do something strictly EBM. You know, the old school XMTP, Leaether Strip-style of stomp-beat. I did an album's worth of stuff and began shopping it around, imagine my delight when Zoth Ommog actually picked it up! I did the first two albums for Zoth, but the guy who signed me, Alex, left and I didn't exactly hit it off with his replacement, Torben Schmidt. We had some differences of opinion and it was pretty obvious I was better off elsewhere. Hence the shift to Doppler Effect. They then set up a license with Wire and that's where we are today. Though I have to say I can't say nice enough things about both Doppler and Wire. After all the label BS I have been through over the years, it's nice to deal with people on a professional level at last!

IN: All the album covers and titles feature a theme of sex and religion, it seems. What is the artistic vision behind Bio-Tek?

Sharp: Satanic pornography is a term I like to bandy around — or satanic EBM even. Let's say I have a more than passing interest in the occult, and I use that in the "literal" — that which is hidden — sense. I think my appreciation

for topics like trashy horror movies and HP Lovecraft is pretty well documented.

IN: Bio-Tek is pretty famous for its sampling, particularly its samples that have also been used by other bands (Skinny Puppy, Front Line Assembly, et al). I hear you're pretty unrepentant about that.

Sharp: Hell yeah. Partly it's a case of: it's a cool dialog sample I'll take it, I don't care if someone else already has. But I guarantee you that Bio-Tek albums also contain a good portion of samples so obscure, that no one but a serious horror movie fan is going to recognize where they originate from. I suspect Jean Rollin movies are a little thin on the ground in the U.S.

IN: As an artist, you have literally dozens of projects (New Mind, Hexedene, Takshaka, Hyperdex-1-Sect, etc). What prompts you to create a new project? What does Bio-Tek express about you that the others do not?

Sharp: Dozens of projects yes, but not so many are still active anymore. I think they all have some different aspect of my musical personality. I do consciously try to individualize them. Obviously the collaborative projects have other people's input too. Bio-Tek, I think, is an outlet for that part of me that's probably still too gothic for its own good. And I use the G word also in its classical sense, not its current parlance.

IN: The track name "Vengeance Not Victory" on *Ceremony of Innocence*... seems strangely familiar. Care to comment?

Sharp: Yes, it is a somewhat friendly swipe at a certain band and genre, which I don't need to name. I think the gentleman concerned has taken it in the spirit it was intended. Well we're still on email terms anyway!

IN: Have you ever played any live shows as Bio-Tek? Think you'll ever tour?

Sharp: No, it was never ever conceived as a live project. Any live shows from this point on are probably going to be instrumental only, or of the things I do with other singers. The car accident I was involved in last summer pretty much put a stop to doing shows in the short term, but I think I'll start doing some again next year, I've kind of missed it!

IN: All of the Bio-Tek covers have pretty arresting artwork. Whose photos are these and how did you end up using them? Is bondage an important theme to Bio-Tek?

Sharp: From the very start I wanted each Bio-Tek CD to have a certain look, and that's gradually evolved and become more explicit with each subsequent

release. The photos themselves are done by Vicci Musson, a UK based fetish photographer. The pictures are commissioned and exclusive to the release. I also have to mention the amazing design and layout work that Josh Finney* then does. He works his magic with the raw image files to make the finished design.

I think though the imagery has gone about as far as we can take it without moving into really explicit pornography. So things will be a little different for the future releases. In fact the whole project is moving and changing.

IN: Why the Crowley samples on *Ceremony of Innocence*. Are you into Crowley?

Sharp: Yes. What ever your opinion of the man, his figure looms large over the whole occult world. If you have any real interest in occultism, you cannot go very far without bumping into Crowley. I find him an endlessly fascinating and inspirational figure. Though, for me, I find more in the works of Austin Spare. There's actually a poll being conducted in this country at the moment — the greatest Englishmen/ women — my vote is split 50 / 50 between Crowley and Cromwell.

IN: What's the future of Bio-Tek?

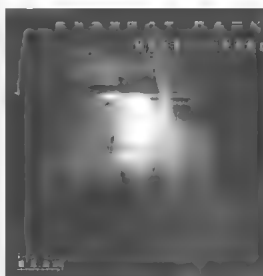
Sharp: Right now what I'm slowly piecing together is an instrumental album — an album that concentrates on the more symphonic aspect of this project — each track will be either an alternate piece of soundtrack to an existing horror movie, or a piece inspired by a certain aspect of fantastic literature. I think it's time to move the focus and progress. Doing soundtrack/backgrounds is in danger of becoming my day-job, and as such I feel I finally have the expertise to pull this off over the length of a full CD.

But, hell, nothing ever goes to plan, so wait and see.

* Josh Finney is a former IndustrialNation writer-turned-freelance artist!

For more information on Bio-Tek and other Jonathan Sharp projects, please see:
www.sonic-boom.com/mission-control/

Fuchno



Perfect Dark Here I Stand

Contact:
ADAM RECORDINGS
408 Davis Ave
Suite 1
Harrison, NJ 07029
U.S.

This EP is unlike anything you have ever heard. Emotional, creative and gabber al. at once. The trax are short, sweet, good natured and fun. Anyone who thinks hardcore is too repetitive will think again after hearing this. Beat by beat, Perfect Dark unravels the true deal with hardcore in the breakdown of "Wake Up." "Ever get the feeling that everything you do your whole life is one big crock of shit?" Oh, hellz yes. Sounds are added as he explains further and then it kicks. "Welcome to Dark's world of gabber hardcore." There's another little freestyle vocal session with Perfect Dark over snares and high hats during "Hardcore in My Blood" and then the bass drops. "Beats were made for stomping and that's just what they'll do. One of these days these beats are gonna stomp all over you." I almost shit myself the first time I heard that.

Cute little happy sounds follow hacked to smithereens with the gabber beats like an axe. Brilliant. Make sure you catch this guy's live P.A. He goes by the name ATROA now. Definitely very air guitar worthy. [DJ Mama C]

DJ Buzz Fuzz — The Revisited EP

The best way to describe the A-side "Hey!" by Tony Sa.monelli is to ask you to think of gabber with two step vocals. Kind of scary. There's an extraordinarily cheesy breakdown followed by a phat buildup that drops into the kind of hardcore that teeters toward the speed of superhard Chicago house. I will probably never use this track unless I'm really drunk or have run out of both sides of all my records to play at a house party. The B side features "Frequencies" by DJ Buzz Fuzz; the original a2'95 mix and a 2002 mix. The '95 mix is the hot shit. Rough tough and anthemic. Classic. Tweaky old skool sounds but still incredibly hard hitting. The 2002 mix is more nu skoolish (obviously). It skips the bounciness and gets straight down to business with rocking. (BZRK Records, c/o L.Costellostraat, 22 135 CN Almere, Holland) [DJ Mama C]

Panacea — ChartBreaka EP

I am completely addicted to this. *Chartbreaka* consists of three plates filled with utter insanity. Imagine deep, dark, rolling basslines (the best part of dark tech step), peppy vocals and old skool hardcore sound effects (the best party of happy hardcore). These tracks are perfect for mixing with hardcore. They're relentless, ruthless and right up my alley. The exact opposite of minimal. There is true fusion of hardcore and drum'n'bass on the Dj Scud Burnt Out Raver Mix of "King of the Jungle" probably even more so than the original. The vocals range from UK MC to scary ass spell casting all over kick ass beats of course. I'm usually pretty stationary while I'm spinning but when I play these plates I wish I had something to throw up in the air or set on fire. I end up doing this hybrid of the jungle nod and head banging like a candy raver nightmare. (Position Chrome/Force Inc., 4060 St. Laurent, suite 602B, Montreal, Quebec, H2W 1Y9 CANADA) [DJ Mama C]

Schizoid — All Things are Connected

SCHIZOID, a true to form digital hardcore artist hailing from Kitchener, Ontario, Canada pollutes your mind w.th harsh in-your-face racket that can hardly be classified as music, but is well recognized and endowed by many extreme music lovers. From Schizoid's DIY (do .t yourself) release *Enough Is Enough* featuring the premier and raw power of what J.Schizoid is capable of producing, made way to his "2000 Promoganda" CD which combined the old raw power with the new elements of brutality. Still the materials are nothing in comparison with Schizoid's first full length pressed release "All Things Are Connected" (DTECHO).

All Things are Connected spews forth 14 tracks crammed full of political outcries embedded in screams of rage that are backed by a matrix of computer based glitchy sounds of electronic noise, metal influenced guitars and a mixture of samples strewn in and out of the songs. *All Things are Connected* is an album that at first is hard to grasp the concept of and acquires a particular taste in music, but all in all strikes highly of originality and intellectual concepts that test all your limits. Its an album that must be played at extreme volumes to generate the proper atmosphere and listening environment, and its sure to piss off any parent in the process. (DTRASH c/o Jason S, 34 Ontario Street North #1, Kitchener, Ontario, N2H 4Y4, Canada) [Wednesday Elektra]

FUCHNO

BIO-TEK

INDUSTRIALNATION

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INDUSTRIALNATION

Psyche

By Nick Garland



photo: DJ Bitter

IN: When you first began Psyche did you have an idea of where you wanted to take it and what you wanted it to symbolize?

Huss: Yes I did, but never knew if it would be realized. I think we've managed to retain the meaning and overall feeling of Psyche songwriting since the beginning. Mainly we really wanted to make freaky synth tracks with interesting and well-thought-out lyrics. Now after all the releases I think I've maintained a good documentation of life experiences. It's fairly biographical but also observant of developmental aspects of humanity as well. So now I guess I have developed the status of Psyche's intentions after all.

IN: Has Psyche's progression pleased you? Was it what you had expected?

Huss: Well my brother and I at the time seriously thought "Brain Collapses" could be a Top 40 Hit, or at the very least "Unveiling the Secret." The closest we ever came to commercial radio play was "Eternal," but "Sanctuary" got on the radio in Germany so that has been good. I have my ideals, but expectations are mainly just to survive and make music as long as I can. And by default I have created a certain legacy I hope.

IN: Do you feel that your sound is still relevant today?



There are some bands that have been around for decades who are perfectly content with resting on their previous success and touring with a discography as a tool to sell "best of" compilations in dire need of creative updating. Music that was once cutting edge now attracts a tour audience that hasn't listened to new music since Reagan left the Oval Office. Enter Psyche, the band that brought several hits to Europe in the 80s, a constantly mutating collective that isn't afraid to forge ahead of their stagnant contemporaries. Their ever-evolving trademark electronic pop sound crosses temporal and creative boundaries making Psyche as relevant and as inspiring today as they were nearly two decades ago.

The Psyche legacy cuts deeply and intertwines with the pasts of many other bands. The band began in Edmonton, Canada, when brothers Darrin and Stephen Huss combined horror and electronics in front of an unsuspecting audience. Dwayne Goettel even played with Psyche for their very first live appearances before deciding to move to Vancouver to join Skinny Puppy. Now consisting of lyricist and vocalist Darrin Huss and sound designer Remi Szyzka, Psyche continue to refine their sweet but biting electronic sound. Darrin looks back on Psyche's past and shares his youthful recipe for keeping the band fresh and interesting.

Huss: Well I think the newer sound with Remi is today's sound. The older stuff is relevant as a reference point for some people. I think there are a lot of timeless tunes in our back catalogue. The more we become predictable, the more relevant an alternative is needed, isn't it? I think some of our songs are downright timeless! I mean if you look at Soft Cell's "Tainted Love" or Eurythmics "Sweet Dreams" I'd say that sound is still relevant. Otherwise people wouldn't constantly be updating these songs! Maybe in 10 years some new groups will bring out their interpretations of Psyche tunes. There's been a few. And Psyche is more than just a "music of the moment" thing. I think songs like "Misery," "Brain Collapses," "Eternal" or "The Saint Became a Lush" will still sound fresh to many as they discover our back catalogue.

IN: Describe the synergy the two of you have both on and off stage and how it compares to previous Psyche line-ups?

Huss: We generally seem to understand what we're trying to achieve with Psyche and enjoy performing our latest material. I think the excitement in the audience for our latest sound adds to our enjoyment and builds up our confidence. Maybe this was lacking at certain periods of Psyche's line-up. It's the youth, beautiful youth.

IN: Do you feel that as Psyche ages you have to make a special effort to keep your sound fresh and interesting, especially for the younger audience?

Huss: In a way yes, but it just accidentally happens that we are always fresh and interesting. I can't deny that I am aware of what the younger audience is into, but the advantage for me now is that many aren't aware what "electro" sounded like before and so we can experiment in any way at all.

IN: How do you think the new Psyche sound compares to pre-Artifact releases?

Huss: Some would say it's cleaner and more futuristic. A few of the songs like "Looking Glass" or "One Last Kiss" could've come from the earlier Psyche, though, I think. But overall we're into the modern club sound which we'd kind of ignored in the 90s.

IN: Why do you want to take Psyche into a more club-friendly direction?

Huss: Because with the ignorance of the mainstream radio and video channels the only option is in clubs, I feel. I like the atmospheric side to Psyche as well and don't want to give that up, but a whole album of slower quieter stuff rarely receives notice these days. And there is quite honestly lots of room to be innovative in dance music. Grooves are always evolving and mutating.

IN: Who does the cover art for your albums? How do the art and music relate to one another?

Huss: Originally all the covers were decided upon by us except the first album *Insomnia Theatre* which had a bloody head smashed on concrete (chosen by Louis at New Rose) and ironically fit perfectly with that album although we found it a bit brutal. Then we had the "pop star" phase where we were often on our covers ourselves, and felt the way we looked was our music. In fact we repeated this for the Accession release of *Sanctuary* with just our heads in the darkness, and the title in blood red. But if we're talking about the Artobject covers, well Yolk, the label owner, chose the design for the *Sanctuary* EP and *Endangered Species* [editor's note: these covers were created by former Industrial Nation writer-turned-freelance artist Josh Finney]. I had the idea of the hand somewhere disembodied. These images follow the statements of the particular albums, I hope. We were honestly so focused on our remix album that we really kind of let that one go as far as creative control on the design. We will focus more on the artwork for the next album. I know some may think the drawings on the original *Misguided Angels* are a bit too gothic for that collection, but I wanted something moody and striking. It's obvious we're now seen as more of an electro act but I don't want to forfeit a striking image for some computer design.

IN: Do you think that some of the new digital designs have become somewhat cliché for electronic bands?

Huss: Damn right you are! I hate them all, especially the "white cover" electro trend. It's fine if you sound like Kraftwerk or Haujobb, something Sci-Fi I guess, but I'm more into humanity, personally.

IN: Choose one of your favorite songs and guide us through the creative process. What inspired you to write that song and how does the programming complement it?

Huss: I really have too many stories behind my songs, just one? I'll just say that my favorite songs are always those where the lyrics and melody come almost subconsciously, and just flow out of me. Examples of those are: "Eternal," "Drowning Pool," "The Hiding Place," "Unbreakable," "The Outsider" and "The Beyond." "Renegades" is also an example where I find the music and vocals really define each other. The music is actually written first in most cases.

IN: What has motivated you to keep making music as Psyche after all these years?

Huss: Courage provoked by fear! Another thing is because I just feel that there's still much to be done in electronic pop. Too many people aren't really doing it well so I continue to develop my own niche.

IN: What sets apart Psyche from all the other electronic pop bands?

Huss: My voice and I think our style of pop is always a bit rougher around the edges and less calculated than many are today.

IN: Why did you choose to cover Soft Cell's "Sex Dwarf?" Why has Marc Almond been a big musical influence?

Huss: "Sex Dwarf" is a happy accident that appeared in 1994 originally. Since the album before, called *Intimacy*, was very slow and moody, I felt we were lacking a scandalous dirty club hit! In fact, I originally recorded this cover for a tribute sampler, but later convinced my label at the time to release it. I always liked the title, and since Psyche normally has no real "sexy" songs I figured this would be the one. Of course Soft Cell are the gods, and Marc Almond has achieved things I can still only dream about. I've been compared to him my whole life anyway, but that was in fact the reason I chose to distort my vocals on the original recording, and still people said I sound like him! Why has Marc been an influence? There are a few true originals in this biz, and those are the only people who inspire me.



IN: Much of the lyrics on *The Hiding Place* are quite somber. What events or situations in your life have affected the songwriting on this album?

Huss: That's the irony of this super modern record because the lyrics are almost a therapeutic journey through all that I remember, and how I got to this point in my life. A similar journey was taken on *The Influence* in 1989. "Imaginary Life" sums up the whole mood. I almost used that as the title for the album in fact. "Renegades" jumps out of the concept with its aggressive rebel chorus, although, yeah, there's even a bit of sorrow in that lyric as well. I guess I'm often in that mood, although it was summer! *The Hiding Place* was like being reborn so I guess I had to clear out a lot of baggage first.

IN: As we become more reliant on technology to fulfill our everyday needs, do you feel that somehow society becomes dehumanized or irreverent of the needs of other people?

Huss: It was already getting like that in the 90s, now it's extreme. I think the general populace either embraces it or they go kicking and screaming against it. I guess I like the Cronenbergian route (see Videodrome). I say mutate along with it, but be careful about who your friends are!

IN: Who arranged the remixes on *Endangered Species* and are you pleased with the final products?

Huss: I wanted Massiv In Mensch again because I liked their version of "Unbreakable." Sixty Winters are some new musician friends I got to know and recorded "Memento" with. They surprised us with remixes of two of our new songs, and we just went for that. We felt they stand on their own and then you can prove that not everyone needs "name" remixers to come up with the goods. Sushiboy is an unknown project that decided to take on "Goodbye Horses." I really like the mix of "The Hiding Place" except for one of the techno sequences in the middle which I rudely cut out on the European release. It's two minutes longer on Artobject because I relented in the end.

IN: Darrin, you seem to be a person of great integrity. How has your anti-drug stance influenced the creative and financial quality of Psyche?

Huss: I'm not really so concerned about it. It's just for me. I could never relate to any need for hard drugs. And I don't even have an interest in hash or pot, but that's just the way I am. I gave up telling anyone what to do with themselves a long time ago. I just don't need it is all. I do like alcohol sometimes which is just as bad, but I never lost money because of drugs. I've never needed that "extra" help to write songs and many thought

my brother and I must have been acidheads to make stuff like "Mr. Eyeball Ooze" anyway. Life is weird enough for me.

IN: Where did you grow up and how has your early life affected your musical tastes and direction?

Huss: I've never quite grown up, but I spent my formative years in Canada followed by France and Germany. The dawn of the electronic duo in the early 80s obviously has a lot to do with my tastes and direction. Just having a drum machine and a synth for the first time was inspiring. In the beginning I was more into experimental stuff. The idea of making pop-oriented songs with a twist was most likely inspired by Fad Gadget, Gary Numan, and Soft Cell. Psyche has always kept its off-center course. Remi moved from Poland to Duisburg, Germany when he was 15. So weirdly enough we both ended up in the same area around the same time. I think the European electro scene of the 90s would be his main influence. Groups like And One and Covenant but also some early trance techno stuff

IN: In the early days, you toured with seminal bands like Suicide and Alien Sex Fiend, but now bands such as Beborn Beton and De/Vision are your contemporaries. How has the touring experience changed over the years?

Huss: I think any kind of live stage performance is somehow rock 'n' roll theater. I don't see any differences — sometimes big audiences, sometimes just a hundred people. I stick to my beliefs of performance, and we want people to share an adventure with us.

IN: What are the biggest obstacles that you face as a musical artist?

Huss: Those contemporaries [laughs]! But seriously, I don't know, still trying to figure that one out. Getting older doesn't help!

IN: What can we expect from Psyche in the near future?

Huss: Bitchin' electro tunes, freaky singing, and a few modern clichés turned on their heads.

IN: Where do you see Psyche going musically in the next few years?

Huss: I do hope one day to make the "solo" album to show other aspects of my vocals, but until that day Psyche will continue to try and expose uncharted electric avenues while telling stories from the mind's netherworld.



By Kyronfive

It's rare that a band comes along that creates something so innovative and inspiring that it makes waves in multiple electronic music genres. Even rarer does that band crop out of the middle of nowhere. Welsh brothers Paul and John Healy have done literally just that, both cropped up out of the middle of nowhere (in their case a small town in Wales) and unleashed a sound on the unsuspecting masses that has been embraced by not only powernoise enthusiasts but by the hardcore, gabber, drum & bass, and IDM communities. Somatic Responses has been around less than a decade but, due to their popularity and prolific nature, they've already put out more records and CDs than most bands release in a lifetime. Not surprisingly, the list of labels they've released material on reads like a who's who of hardcore and experimental music. By creating behemoth tracks forged of bleak and unrelenting beats and soundscapes, they've built a reputation for creating music that is hard and mean. Despite their surly sonic profile, the brothers come across as positive and optimistic people in person. The following interview was conducted via email. The first half of the questions were answered by John Healy and the remainder by Paul Healy.



IN: Why the name Somatic Responses? I have to admit I don't normally ask bands where they got their name but I'm legitimately curious about yours.

John Healy: When we came up with the name (about '93) I (John) was studying for a degree in Biomedical Sciences, which turned out to be extremely boring and I left as working in a lab for the rest of my life wasn't what I'd planned. Anyway, one of the modules I studied was the nervous system and from this came the term "a somatic response" — basically it is the voluntary part of your nervous system which allows choice rather than involuntary actions (i.e. when you pick up a hot plate you automatically let go). It's a statement by ourselves saying that we do what the fuck we like (musically) because we love our art so much. We don't follow trends or styles — we just do what feels right & what we'd like to hear.

IN: How did your extreme, challenging sound come about? We assume this sort of music is not commonplace where you live. Does the Wales lifestyle affect the Somatic Responses' sound?

J.Healy: Well, we love hard, fucked up, funky beats. The hardness comes from the sheer power and energy found in those electric beats, the complicity and intricacy excites us as it's challenging — it motivates us, the funky aspect probably comes from our love of breakbeats — god bless James Brown. Ammanford / Wales has NO hardsound scene whatsoever and, strangely enough, this isolation has helped us develop our sound, uncontaminated and our own. I don't think that the Welsh life style is represented by our music, but it does represent our own lives.

IN: It's pretty rare that a band comes along that can be simultaneously embraced in so many genres. You've been an important band in the IDM, broken beat, hardcore, and powernoise scenes. Why do you think this has come about?

J.Healy: We love many styles of music and we believe that it's very dangerous to limit your appreciation of music / art — yes you will have favorites but it's essential to us to have an open mind and an eclectic approach to music. We're big fans of electronica in general (we hate the word IDM as it's a useless description) and probably listen to this



genre most — at the moment, but you can't beat blasts out some fucking hard and dirty beats on a loud system.

IN: Similarly, your music seems to embrace many different electronic music styles. Is this schizophrenia, or just an interest in all sorts of music?

J.Healy: Both.

IN: Also, you've released records and albums on literally dozens of labels. Was this an intentional decision on your parts or did it just end up that way?

J.Healy: It's just ended up this way, as time has moved we're becoming more selective as, like most artists, we have been screwed over by record labels, but we've also met some labels that we totally trust and will hopefully release further material in the future. One of the reasons that we release on so many labels is due to the amount of material we collect in a short period of time. It's safe to say that we have enough material available at any time to release 3 or 4 full-length albums!

IN: In what ways does making music with a sibling benefit your collective writing process? How does it hinder it?

Paul Healy: We are constantly competing and trying to impress each other, there are no pitfalls to this as far as we see, sometimes we'll spur each other to try something new instead of doing a similar style track 3 times in a row, so it's all positive...working together is a very honest and upfront process.

IN: What do your parents think of your music?

P.Healy: They are proud of us and have supported us (sorry, mam, about all the years of music blasting throughout the house). They like some of it but a lot just passes them by I suppose....

IN: What influences Somatic Responses? Not just other music, of course, but movies, visuals, sights, sounds, etc.

P.Healy: We love films by David Lynch, and lots of sci-fi, we also love the work of Chris

Cunningham, surrealist art is cool too. Dali, Roberto Matta, and HR Giger being amongst our favorites...being from Wales we love both dramatic and bleak landscapes...mountains, the sea, harsh weather are nice for creating mood...

IN: Tell us a little about Photon Emissions. What are your plans with this label?

P.Healy: It will be an outlet for our own material at first then bringing in some friends and creative artists from around the world, plans are on hold temporarily as we are both affected by recent moving of houses...

IN: Are you ever amazed at the way in which your music has traveled the globe?

P.Healy: Yes it's great to get email from Argentina, Russia, Tumble (top tumble) and all over realizing that our music has made an impact on someone's life, no matter how insignificant it's very flattering!

IN: Your music can be dark and disturbing, yet you come across as fairly positive and optimistic in your interviews. Care to comment on that dichotomy?

P.Healy: We think that life should be positive and fun I suppose, but when you touch your creative side it seems the darker more serious side comes out, whether this is a form of therapy I'm not sure but it helps us remain stable. I don't see the need for ridiculous cheesy music, when people say this track is funny it angers me slightly, if I want to laugh I'll watch comedy. Humor and music is a very difficult mix that very few have mastered.

IN: What is ahead for Somatic Responses?

P.Healy: A full length CD on Component Records, A Cdatakill remix on Ad Noiseam, a Gridlock remix on Zod, a release 03 on Zhark recs., Talks are underway for a release on Zod, and more stuff for Hymen including a collaboration with a very special electro outfit.

For more information, please visit the official Somatic Responses website:

www.c8.com/somatics





"POWERED TO THE EXTREME...
THIS ALBUM GROOVES LIKE AN
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PELLET GUN" JNK 13

"LIKE A BLOODTHIRSTY CRUISING
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ELEMENTS OF BOTH METAL AND
INDUSTRIAL IN ORDER TO SERVE
ITS TWISTED GOAL" BKN

IRON LUNG CORP

"DITCH THE ATTITUDE, PALLY"



Combining industrial strength know-how, hook factory rave ups, an attitude of flippant disregard for your mom and a big middle finger to the rock star camp, ILC presents its first new album in 6 years. Their previous album *Big Shiny Spears* featured the club anthem cover of Nitzer-Ebb's 'Join in the Chant.'

Featuring Dan Meit from the CLAYPEOPLE and members of ACUMEN NATION, 'Ditch the Attitude, Pally' was produced by Lord Pickles & Kidd Knobbs. This rock and giddy ride through the underbelly of industrial rock and riot is riddled with crushing drum programming, manic synth and buzzsaw guitars, combining rage, heartbreak and humor throughout. Featuring 'Piehole', 'Superstar' and 'Canine Strap' this album pays homage rhythmically to the ILC's industrial forefathers of the WaxTrax era, while harnessing the songcraft and melody that the Cracknation crew is known for.



ACUMEN NATION



DJ? ACUCRACK'S crushing sub-bass, blistering breakbeats and haunting melodies leave no stone unturned in their quest to blur the genre lines of electronica, and score one for the U.S. in the battle for stateside respect in the drum n' bass arena...

Look for the "SO TO SPEAK (featuring Toni Halliday from Curve)" video on MTV2's Dance show and 120 Minutes.



Self-produced by the team of Lord Pickles & Kidd Knobbs, the brains behind DJ? ACUCRACK as well, "THE FIFTH COLUMN" is rife with pummeling loops, samples and melodic hooks. This album captures the anger and heartache of the original industrial rock bands of the 90's before the current slew of polished, major-label radio-friendly suburban bred angst began breeding. Without skipping a beat "COMING DOWN: THE BASTARD REMIX ALBUM" serves as its mech-minded companion, featuring remixes by DEAN GARCIA (CURVE) ERIC POWELL (16 VOLT) DJ? ACUCRACK, LANCE GRABMILLER and THE AGGRESSION.

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SHOULD HAVE BEEN" ALTERNATIVE PRESS

"UNIQUE... TUNEFUL... A FACTORY FULL OF INDUSTRIAL THRASH"
-NEW CITY CHICAGO

REALLY SOMEONE TO LISTEN TO IN A SEA OF COPYCATS."
-INDUSTRIAL NATION

DJ? ACUCRACK

"THE DOPE KING"

"THE MOST FORMIDABLE FORCE OF THE
POST-INDUSTRIAL MOVEMENT."
-CMJ

"THEY CERTAINLY KNOW WHAT IT TAKES
TO STORM A DANCEFLOOR."
-KLRB

GLIDES FROM AURAL NIGHTMARE TO
AURAL NIGHTMARE ON A STREAM
OF FEVERISH, BUBBLING RHYTHM AND
FAIRLY CORROSIVE SONIC TEXTURES"
-CHICAGO TRIBUNE

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DVD

Contact:
Bumfights
P.O. Box 81888
Las Vegas, NV 89180
U.S.

Bumfights - Cause for Concern

If it seems as if several heartless men are preying on the desperation of homeless men, they are. They call these acts "Bumfights." In essence a few guys pay the homeless men from a couple of major cities to fight each other and perform violent, harmful stunts. This movie contains violence, adult language, and mild nudity. These are three of my favorite subjects.

To most people this movie is a brutal depiction of street life. Personally I like to think of it as retaliation. These bums are getting paid for these stunts with beer, food, hookers, and drugs. It's not as if someone is holding a gun to their head. They are proud of what they are doing.

The main man in the film is Rufus the Stunt Bum. He performs a series of acts which include repeatedly ramming his head into a fast food drive-thru sign, throwing himself down the side of a mountain and picking fights with all of his "bum" friends. Now that's what I call entertainment! A friend of Rufus the Stunt bum gets "BUM-FIGHTS" tattooed on his forehead on his own free will, all for a nice blowjob. Another "character" in this film is Bling Bling, a crack addict who shows the precise way to smoke crack and then lights his hair on fire and then defecates on the sidewalk.

The 23 year old filmmakers Ray Laticia and Ty Beeson who got their idea after witnessing violent altercations among men living on the streets say that "society has a fascination with homeless people, almost a perverse fascination. People don't get a chance to see much of that. We thought it would be exciting to get a glimpse of that kind of life." In several scenes there are instigated acts by the producers in a segment called the "Bumhunter," a parody of television's the "Crocodile Hunter." The sequence starts with a man in a safari outfit who goes out and finds a homeless man sleeping and then quietly sneaks up on him and binds and gags him. He then makes comments on the size and variations of the bums and then marks them up with a pen and then "releases them into their natural habitat." Some may say this is cruel but all the bums on the video have given their consent to be used along with offerings of food, money, and clothing.

This is a brilliant movie and I would advise anyone with a love for good old fashioned violence to witness it. Plus you get the pleasure of seeing these bums getting the shit beat out of them by their own kind. "Spare any change?" (Jenbug)



DVD

Contact:
Dance.com Media, Inc.
2415 East Camelback Road
Suite 900
Phoenix, AZ 85016
U.S.

Speed Tribe

What's cooler in your hand: an air guitar, or an air hammer? The Air Hammer is a much noisier tool used by racing crews to remove and tighten wheels on an endurance car such as those highlighted in the Le Mans 2001 spectacle featured in "Speed Tribe". The annual pilgrimage to Le Mans, France is not a likely event to attract electro-indie fans but this is the video subject matter of this Front 242 side-project. Daniel Bressanuti and Patrick Codenys have contributed to the 24 Heures Du Mans DVD. Dubbed Speed Tribe, this project is available on DVD+CD as well as the standard CD package released through Dance.Com

This is not a music video, it is a visual document of the 2001 Le Mans race with a great technological soundscape. This audio visual concept album project was completed by husband and wife team, Rod Chong and Sharon Matarazzo (collectively known as MediaKill). Young video director Chong met Daniel B. and Patrick met in L.A., when he was working on the mainly unseen Skinny Puppy's Process "Curcible" video. It was at this time the three agreed to work together on a project but only recently has Digital Video production become cost effective for a specialized title. The racing theme DVD visuals were put together from last year's race footage including interviews by veteran racing commentator Paul Truswell. Vocal excerpts of drivers are used as samples throughout the soundtracking. The haziness of lights as cars emerge over the crest and bulging video frames pound to the soundtrack as scenes come alive with electricity. The rain of that year gave a great backdrop for scene changes and refracting lights.

Intertwined beats much like the different experience the driver has travelling at speed through the French countryside then coming back to the crowd filled grandstands. Speed Tribe features Le Mans like you've never seen it in a 25 minute visual mutation. A second 'alternate' version is ready for an immediate viewing as well. Through an amazing cinematic presentation, cars, people and race sounds are set to electronic beats and soundscapes, originally composed and produced in superb surround sound of the refined techniques of Front 242 for the first time in a 5.1 audio mix!

DVD Extras feature race driver interviews which may not impress typical electro/techno viewer as it does the race fan, but the included CD will. The 24 track 60 minute companion audio CD contains exclusive remixes not contained on the DVD. More ambient sounds reworked again by Bressanuti and Codenys. Halfway through the audio disc (track 13 - Grisha) we get back to the title theme and discourse of rhythms... And as a owner's bonus, an ID code to access Internet-only Speed Tribe releases.

Previous alt-rock videos with car themes such as Ministry's "Jesus built my Hot Rod" and Rob Zombie's corny devil rod rock shorts. Rod Chong edited scenes to a precision never seen on music or auto TV to date using the latest in digital filmmaking technologies and special effects. A veritable symphony of high tech sounds with backing surround tracking Rhythmic video pulsations to the soundtrack just add to the entire LeMans experience in a small package. kudos to MediaKill!! (DJBitter)



DVD

Contact:
Music Video Distributors
PO Box 280
Oaks, PA 19456
U.S.

Richard Kern - Hardcore Collection

This was actually released on video back in 1999 so all of these short films are dated from the eighties and early nineties. And you can tell with the cheesy "Evil Dead-style" claymation effects in some of these horror films. If you are unfamiliar with Richard Kern's work, his films are definitely what the title indicates-hardcore. A lot of zombies, a lot of penis, a lot of rape, some necrophiliacs, some gothy mopey boys and a lot of Lydia Lunch. Some of mine and my roommates' favorites on this were "Manhattan Love Suicides" where the main character (half zombie, half man?) would get so mad that each time he did, parts of his body would fall off. The one where there was the necro- porn with super fake cum shots was pretty funny. Oh, and the one with Picasso face. Half his face was mangled so his girlfriend felt bad and wanted to mangle her face, too. So she took an iron to her own face. He was pretty mad though, disgusted by HER ugly face and burned her to death. 'Submit to Me Now' was pretty funny, he hated his underwear so much he shaved off his pubes. There is a lot of good music on this, too. With scores from Foetus, Sonic Youth and Front Line Assembly. Two things disturbed me though, for real. One, Kim Black getting her pussy sewn shut (WHY?!) and two, Lydia Lunch (god, her hair looked good!) getting ass raped FOR REAL, liking it, beating the shit out of some girl with her rapist FOR REAL, liking that, and then in the end I discovered she wrote the plot for that film. Interesting. Another interesting thing about this collection of films was pretty much everyone was on drugs. And you can tell. It's almost like Richard Kern was focusing on that. Tweakers and junkies both, it was obvious. So, if you are into artsy fartsy cheesy horror with wierd rape scenes, zombies and tweeks, or if you're a Richard Kern fan, than this is for you. (Lisa Swiss)

Book



Contact:
TVT Records
23 E. 4th St.
New York, NY 10003
U.S.

Contact:
TVT Records
23 E. 4th St.
New York, NY 10003
U.S.

Temporary Spaces

Photographs by Martin Eberle Quotes Temporary Spaces is edited by Heinrich Dubel and has a forward by Ever Backward Never. Temporary Spaces is about the reality of the club scene that, without the musicians, people, fashion and fun, you don't have anything but Temporary Spaces. Martin Eberle takes you through the magical wonderland of Berlin's club scene and shows you the "hot spots" as they really were. Empty, trashy, hole in the walls, that turns into an enchanted kingdom when the sun goes down. One of my favorite clubs that Eberle talks about is the Club 4 Chunk. An angled one story brick building with an expansive cellar. It was a former building yard and materials storage depot. One fellow clubber said about Club 4 Chunk, "You'll only leave this drunk and disheveled." Now that's what I call a good time. Filming and being a part of the club scene for over ten years has given Eberle a unique vision of the crazed nightlife. I am convinced he has seen it all. Through his astonishing photographs and random quotes from the "party people" themselves, you can see why these were the finest places in the world to get "pissed out of your head." [Jenbug]

KMFD - Beat by Beat

Beat-by-Beat is the 3-hour DVD collection of KMFD live performances, music videos and live footage. Included are live bootlegs from the "Money" and "Beat by Beat" tours from Chicago, Palo Alto, and Dallas. Considering that the live performance footage is "bootleg" the quality is really rather good, making you feel as though you are actually among the crowd, screaming along. Backstage commentary from band members, roadies, and stagehands makes for entertaining intermissions between the classic BruteO inspired videos. As well as giving you an intimate look at KMFD's life on tour. The previously unreleased "Zip" video as well as the rarely seen "Megalomaniac" video (that was previously only available as a video single) are also included and make for an excellent added bonus for all those die hard KMFD fans that have wondered where they could find this material. Bottom line, this DVD makes the perfect KMFD video library. A must have for true KMFD fans and well worth the money for the more casual fan. [vnrwn]

Rammstein

By Gert Hof Rammstein is a work of art comprised of various artistic genres: music, theatre, pyrotechnics, and lighting. Throughout Gert Hof's 160 pages of astonishing photographs of Rammstein you begin to understand little parts of Till, Paul, Olli, Richard, Schneider and Flake. Apart from each other they have parents and children and they all have many different hobbies and ideas. When these men come together as one unit they ARE a stick of dynamite.

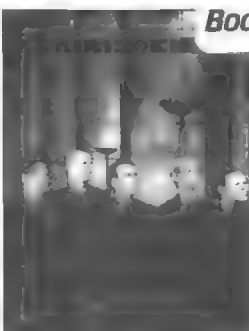
Having known the boys of Rammstein for more than six years, Gert Hof is able to put Rammstein's stunning live performances into still photos. Only Hof, a brilliant man, could possibly portray them as the fire and light that their music puts off. Anyone who has ever been to a Rammstein show knows that with each song they perform comes a colossal explosion. Some kind of stunt that makes your mouth drop and all you can say is "dayuuuum!"

This is also how I felt as I was taking my sweet time looking at every little detail in this book. Honestly you will not want to set it down. I was absolutely stunned. After seeing there live show I was sure that nothing could top that. This book not only gives you some live footage but it takes you through Rammstein's "fantasy world." It's not all "pretty" but it is definitely pleasing to the eye. I would definitely recommend this book not only to the hardcore Rammstein fans, but also to anyone that just likes a great work of art. Or if you just like a little bit of FIRE under your ass. [Jenbug]

Gothic Industrial Madness

Wow! This video collection has everyone on it! It contains material compiled from the 3 VHS: Industrial Revolution 1 and 2, and Gothic Industrial Alternative Videos. Bands on here range from old industrial heroes like Foetus, Penal Colony, Throbbing Gristle, Clock DVA, Psychic TV, and Einsturzende Neubauten to newer industrial acts like Leather Strip, Spahn Ranch, Pigface, and Killswitch...Klick. Also included are Christian Death, Mephisto Walz, Rosetta Stone, Big Electric Cat.... The list goes on and the amount of bands on here alone is worth buying it. [Lisa Swiss]

Book



Contact:
Die Gestalten Verlag
Münzstraße 15
D-10178 Berlin
Germany

Goth Chic

A Connoisseur's Guide to Dark Culture by Gavin Baddeley I love reference books devoted to Dark Culture, Death Rock, even "Goth" - if you will. All sorts of little tidbits of creepy info to expand my already dark and corrupted mind. I feel I myself am somewhat of a "connoisseur" of all dark things in this world, yet I still learned lots of useless, gothy information I can now store in my brain while I wait for Death Rock Trivial Pursuit to come out. (WOW! That would be cool!) "Goth Chic" is an extremely well written and informative novel-style guide to everything sinister. Starting with the "real" Goths, the Germanic Barbaric Tribe from the Dark Ages this detailed book goes on to the Marquis De Sade, Max Schreck, Theda Bara, Bela Lugosi, Miriam, and MY favorite vampire Gary Oldman (he can bite my neck any night!). Edgar Allen Poe, Vincent Price (he will always be the best), Elvira, Beetlejuice, Buffy, Lenore. Don't forget THE MUSIC! Velvet Underground, Jim Morrison, Ian Curtis, Siouxsie, Bauhaus, Jonny Slut, etc. Plus all those nipple piercings and corsets. It's all in here. The topics and info is endless. Which then makes me pose Gavin's first question - as well as mine. What IS Goth? Do you really even know? Because it really is way more than cheesy eyeliner twirls, long black skirts, pretentiousness and pretending that by dancing to electro/industrial at a some nightclub means you really are Goth. It is a CULTURE. It is a way of life. And let's not ever, EVER mention this "Goth" word again. hahahaha! [Lisa Swiss]

Book



Contact:
Plexus Publishing
55A Clapham Common Southside
London SW4 9BX
U.K.

Music Software



Contact:
Bitheadz Software
4400 Capitola Road
Suite 202
Capitola, CA 95010
U.S.

Retro AS-1 Analog Synthesizer

Ok, so before I even begin to review this piece of software I guess I should state that I have been using Retro for years now. Not only is Retro something that I DID NOT immediately uninstall from my computer, but it has become one of those elite pieces of software that I now consider essential for producing any genre of electronic music on a PC. Retro is argumentably the most complete and tweakable virtual analog synth on the market. It is exactly what it claims to be: a studio quality, fully programmable, multi-timbral, polyphonic synthesizer.

Right off the bat you should know that Retro has NO kind of onboard sequencer and is meant to function strictly as a sound module. It can be set up to work with external gear, Cubase, Logic, Performer, Cakewalk, and Pro Tools. External control works well and although Retro seems to run smoothly with VST programs, I couldn't get Cakewalk and Retro to work together well enough to be useful (and if Internet chat is any indicator, neither could anyone else!).

Depending on what you want to do, you can open Retro in 3 different modes. 'Keyboard' mode sets up an on-screen virtual keyboard complete with pitch and mod wheels. Here you can scroll through and play around with all 1,548(!) preset tones using either your mouse or your external MIDI device. I especially love this mode for its super-useful 'chord-maker' feature. 'Mixer' mode sets up a virtual studio mixer where you can assign 16 individual channels of incoming MIDI to 16 individual Retro tones. This mode can give new life to an old groove box or sequencer (example: sending all sequencer tracks off of a boring old MC303 to trigger their own tones on Retro). And last but not least is 'Editor' mode. This is the mode where you can create and edit tones. There is an INSANE amount of parameters and controls to tweak here. 'Editor' mode has 5 different screens:

Configuration - with a map of the tone using icons and arrows to show how the sound flows, 'Main' - shows you your 3 oscillators, 2 filters, and ring mod controls, 'Modulation' - you can route and edit all modulators including Retro's MIDI syncable LFO's, 'Effects' - 2 insertable effects and 2 global effects with extensive editing control including MIDI syncable delay, 'Global' - general controls including portamento, pitch bend range, and pan. The editor has so much control that a beginner user would probably rather slit his wrists than wrestle with the learning curve. On the other hand, an experienced sound designer will find no end to the vast tweakability here.

Contact:
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PO Box 280
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Nosferatu

One of the best and most influential horror movies of all times, *Nosferatu* crept out audiences everywhere back in 1922. Max Schreck was brilliant as Count Orlock - the scariest vampire to date in my opinion. Now an updated version of this silent movie is available with an added music score containing many Cleopatra Gothic/Industrial bands such as Rozz Williams and Electric Hellfire Club. The new soundtrack is definitely a plus to this film, making it spookier than ever. Ooooo, spooky. [Lisa Swiss]



Retro AS-1 - Analog Synthesizer

A few features and two other settings modes make up the rest of Retro. 'MIDI Processor' mode includes a MIDI syncable arpeggiator, split/layer controls, and a section for saving these different set-ups. All other general MIDI and audio settings can be accessed in 'Control Panel' mode. Finally, for recording to WAV or AIFF, Retro comes with its own built-in sound recorder.

All in all Retro is awesomely huge, almost too huge, in fact if Retro has any drawbacks they're probably due to the program's huge-ness. If you don't know what you're doing you're lost. If you DO know what you're doing then Retro is the virtual analog synth you've been waiting for. [Seth]

DVD



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Goth Box

Although this came out on VHS years ago, Cleopatra decided to join the the future of videos and make it available on DVD. Being an old Death Rock junkie, this video collection is pretty amazing. It's great to see infamous Death Rock bands like Red Lorry/ Yellow Lorry, Skeletal Family, The Chameleons U.K., and Lords of the New Church doing select live sets. One highlight is the video of Christian Death doing Romeo's Distress. Although it was a later performance Rozz did when he reunited with the original members, Rozz is still Rozz and he puts on a great performance. (RIP, Rozz!) There are some good later Death Rock acts on here as well, such as Usherhouse, The Wake, Nosferatu, and Switchblade Symphony (cute video!). This also features some extra bonus audio tracks from Die Form, Corpus Delecti, Mephisto Walz, Christian Death, and more. Collectable! [Lisa Swiss]

MK Ultra

MK Ultra is by and large, an unacceptable magazine. It gives off the air of being 'too big for it's britches'. The five-page cover letter that accompanied the magazine was filled with pretentious babble. Alex Zander, the editor, speaks at great, boring length regarding his various experiences with the music industry. Spectre Magazine says, "MK Ultra is fast becoming the guide to dark underground music with an alternative/gothic feel. MK Ultra also labels itself as "the darkest rock n roll publication in the world." They interview bands such as Garbage, Rob Zombie, Cradle of Filth, and Nashville Pussy. Hmm, that's odd. I never really considered any of those bands "gothic". They are alternative at best, and Pop at worst. Now, to be fair, it does have a few redeeming qualities. Namely the KMFD interview. I also found the "Going Green; Inside the Green Party" an interesting read. Unfortunately, these few decent articles are not enough to atone for the other multiple sins. The 'Ultravixxxen' centerfold is a woman who goes by 'RedVamp'. Her wardrobe is unoriginal, and she screams, "I used to be a metal chick, but then I heard KMFD and now I'm so totally industrial/goth!" The whole magazine screams of it, actually. However, if you like alternative and metal, then this would be a good publication for you. While the music may not remotely be to my taste, the coverage was fairly in-depth, and I would assume, should you enjoy such music, interesting. [MalignantFemale]

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IN: We've only heard a little about the Wet & Hard genre in the States. Can you tell us a little about it?

Corvin Dalek: Wet & Hard is club music you can fuck to, at home, in the car, or on the dancefloor. It's really the sound for a new generation of clubbers. It is for those want to live with an open-minded lifestyle. It's about individuality and being open about sexuality, tolerance, freedom of thought, and the eradication of archaic and restricting double standards. Musically, Wet & Hard has evolved from the ruins of trance and techno in the 90's and you could find parallels in there somewhere if you wanted to (after all, we use the same kind of instruments), but it really has its own sound. It is still at an early development stage where its overall sound has yet to be defined. It's a little more than just a name for a style of music though, because it has its own art form called Hotkunst (Hot Art), clothes design, and a message.

IN: Where did the term Wet & Hard come from?

Dalek: Mark Reeder and I were sitting stoned in a sweet street cafe in Pardubice in the Czech Republic flicking through some porn magazines (which were on display to read in the cafe, amongst normal magazines — the Czechs are very open minded!) and we were talking about a term to describe my particular style of "crazy-funky-funny-groovy-pumping-thrusting-technoid-clubsound." When I walked a gorgeous leggy waitress, dressed in a very tight-fitting black cat-suit and high boots. She just put her little French maid's apron over the top of it and we both became very ... agitated. Jokingly, Mark whispered over to me (as if talking to her). "Hey are you wet? 'Cos I'm hard!" and I said that'd be a great name for my style of music — Wet & Hard.

IN: Aside from this genre, what are some other types of music you mix/produce?

Dalek: To be honest, at the moment no other club music is as interesting for me as Wet & Hard. It is free of all definition as there are no boundaries or guidelines to it and therefore it is multi-faceted. Naturally, I buy records from other artists, as they inspire me. But in my sets I try and play mainly very sexual records, ones that I think define, for me, the ethic of Wet & Hard (Richard F's "Cookie Dough Dynamo" is a good example of one of my favorites). This is regardless if those (who consider themselves to be musically superior) still try and categorize them as tech-house, tech-trance, groovy-techno, epic-house, "TV"-trance ... or whatever.

IN: Tell us about Flesh, the label you're involved with.

Dalek: Flesh was created especially for Wet & Hard as a new platform for this sound. It was originally a sub-label of MFS, but now it's an established label in its own right. Mark Reeder wanted to distance the Wet & Hard style from the MFS label because, for some, MFS still has the image of being a trance label — although MFS doesn't release so many so called "trance" records anymore — and he didn't want to cause confusion. The label has other Wet & Hard artists like Michael Burian, Jan Kessler, Eiven Major, Martin Polansky, Joseph Armani and we have released some singles we considered fall into the Wet & Hard category, such as Darren Christian's "Uni-fiktion." Some similar Wet & Hard tracks can be found on my mix compilation *Hotkunst*.

IN: What is Pornoground?

Dalek: Pornoground is really a name for the scene of Berlin clubs like Kit Kat and XS. Pornoground is vastly beyond the idea of the fetish club. These are no-holds-barred clubs where literally anything goes. But these are not smelly swinger clubs! There are no age limits naturally, but these clubs are like any normal club, where the music is Wet & Hard and sexually stimulating and the decoration and ambience is very creative and highly impressive. Young people dance, like anywhere else, the only difference is that there are no double standards to restrict you to experiment with your sexuality. Usually you go to a club to meet someone (in the distant hope that you can eventually have sex with them). It just so happens that in the Pornoground type of club, you can — and no one cares. You can be yourself.

IN: How did you get into mixing?

Dalek: I wanted to have drugs and sex, combined with music.

IN: What is the longest set you have played and where was it?

Dalek: The longest set was with twelve turntables at the Berlin

Atonal Festival. They placed them one after another in one big long line and I had to keep running from one side to the other to keep all the decks flowing at the same time!

IN: Who were some of your early influences as far as producers and DJs?

Dalek: I listen to all kinds of music. As a child, I was influenced by my brother's Pink Floyd records and Ennio Morricone, whose superla-

Never have the words sex, drugs, and dance music been truer than when it comes to Corvin Dalek. The Hungarian-born, Berlin-based DJ and producer creates and mixes cuts for dance clubs where stimulants, fetish-es, and unbridled libido are just as prevalent as dirty beats and a packed dancefloor. A progenitor of a musical style termed "Wet & Hard," which purports to be a sex- and porn-fueled mix of trance and house music, Dalek has swiftly made a name for himself across Europe and in places as far flung as China and Australia. Releasing records on Flesh, a subsidiary of German trance behemoth MFS, Dalek has built up an entire scene devoted to the Wet & Hard concept, something that is more of a lifestyle than simply a musical genre. Dalek took a few minutes from his massive DJ schedule to inform IN that the future will most definitely be Wet & Hard.

tive sound still inspires me today. In the early 90s I was impressed with the production style of artists such as Brian Transceau or William Orbit. My tastes are very diverse these days. I think my deci-

sion to move to Berlin in 1998 was a greater influence on my music, though. Berlin is a city that has found release. It is historical and ultra modern and very cool. It gave me a great inspirational impulse just being here. At this time, I was still making music that was influenced by trance and techno and so I went to the label that really started it all, MFS, to make my first single. Sure, this style of music had impressed me and influenced my DJing. It had been a reflection for my lifestyle at that time, but after my arrival in Berlin I could see that it was no longer a true representation of how I really felt inside.

The trance sound had become boring, repetitive, and very predictable. Mark convinced me to do my own thing and put my open-minded Hungarian background into my music and through this I was able to discover myself and nurture my artistic potential.

IN: As a DJ you obviously travel a lot, what were some of your favorite places to visit?

Dalek: Thailand is my image of paradise, as is South America, especially Colombia (but not for the obvious reasons). The people are so friendly and open-minded there. They feel the rhythm of my music; they can shake their hips to the groove. The same goes for the Romanians ... and then there's the Czech Republic, where they have very beautiful people, and Scotland, who really under-

stand what I do, too. They are mad for it and I love them

IN: Speaking of fans and audiences, what, in your opinion, are some of the best audiences?

Dalek: Impossible to answer this, so see the previous answer! I have fans from all over the world, from Australia to the US from China to the UK. I haven't been everywhere yet so I can't really answer this question. Besides, I really hate to have to make a comparison between the best this or that, how do you measure the best? I do my best to make sure that the people have an unforgettable time. I have had great gigs and unbelievable experiences. I only hope that those who were there also did.

IN: What are some of your favorite tracks to listen to? And, currently, what is your favorite track to mix?

Dalek: I listened to the more progressive and abstract sounds of Pink Floyd as a kid and I still occasionally listen to them today (but only their earlier albums), but I listen to all kinds of music, not just one style and not just club music. I listen to music to relax to, like Goldfrapp, Air, Depeche Mode or film music, too, or early synthesizer music ... or even Eminem. Currently (apart from Jan Kessler's "Psychoactive" and Eiven Major's "Cocksucca" tracks) my favorite, at the moment, is Bryan Zent's "Joplin/Bushido."

IN: There are a lot of talented DJs out there. Who do you listen to and who do you like to see mix live?

Dalek: There are many DJs who I would really like to see, but I never get the chance. Sometimes you play at a festival at the same time as a DJ you'd like to see and you still don't get to see them DJ — this was the case with X-Press 2. I even shared a private airplane with some DJs I like, but our set times were simultaneous and I have yet to hear them. One person who I have shared many DJ experiences with though, and who I respect immensely is my friend and colleague Michael Burian. He was deservedly voted DJ of the year in the Czech Republic and has been promoting the fresh sound of Wet & Hard to the Czechs together with me. He is a wonderful person and a really excellent DJ, as most of the top DJs who have visited his country will attest. Recently, he has performed at London's Gallery and at Creamfields. I love playing with him as we really understand each other and we make a good team for a Wet & Hard evening. He has his own impressive style of Wet & Hard and he is definitely one to watch in the future. He has just finished a new track which will be his follow-up single, after the success of "Blow Me."

IN: What would you say is your greatest achievement?

Dalek: Apart from making a living from DJing? So far, playing on twelve decks.

IN: What are you working on right now?

Dalek: I have just moved into my new studio and so I am working on soldering cables together (not so exciting, eh?). Then I will start on a remix for Blank & Jones's new single — a track with vocals by Anne Clark (a highly acclaimed 80's cult poet). They want a very Wet & Hard remix from me.

IN: Something else I wanted to ask, is what your take is on the relationship the media pushes between drugs and the electronic scene?

Dalek: A never ending debate. Drugs and the music scene have always gone hand in hand. It's nothing new. Humans have always taken drugs. Drugs and the electronic scene? I suppose we just have modern designer drugs. Each musical genre has the drug that defines it. I think that there is a lot of hypocrisy surrounding this subject. There are DJs who take drugs and simply won't admit it. A good example of real hard-core hypocrisy is so-called "king of trance" Eyeball Paul, who claims he is against all drugs and goes around admonishing those that take them, but privately he is known to have a huge coke habit! I am not saying that he shouldn't do it; I am saying he shouldn't say he doesn't do it. But really, so what? I feel it's a pathetic debate in this modern age. Why do people take drugs? To get fucked up! To find release, enhance their perception, music sounds better; it breaks down the barriers etc. Just to get high, people will buy anything that's offered, as they just want to get fucked up, regardless of the consequences and they usually get sold shit. The politicians have to face up that they can't stop people taking drugs, like they couldn't enforce prohibition in the 20's. People will do it anyway and the gangsters will get rich and powerful. If they want complete control, then they should control this business. I know that without E an event like the Berlin Love Parade would be pure hell. The Berlin Police tolerate it for one day and there's almost no trouble. They understand that they don't really need a million drunken kids fighting and throwing up everywhere. This is a lesson that has been learned over the years. Alcohol draws people into a depressed state and makes them aggressive and impossible to control. But, sadly, the stiff laws are made by hypocrites. You have people in governmental positions who make laws banning drugs and they go out and drink like fish. Old people drink, young people take drugs. Most can handle it, only a few can't. You always get a few stupid wankers who abuse them, take too much and end up in a zinc box (I suppose there's the thrill of it being forbidden too which helps sell this product) but it's the minority who can't handle it and, if researched, that usually has a psychological background that stems from elsewhere anyway, like child abuse, peer pressure, or lack of self esteem. But, in comparison with alcoholics and smokers, death from drug taking is almost nothing — especially where marijuana is concerned. Parents want to protect their children by forbidding drugs but, by making drugs illegal, they do much more harm than good. There is definitely not enough information about drugs (especially in schools) and what it is you are taking. So, I think, to solve this problem, drugs should be readily available to buy at chemists and that way there could be government quality control and their precious kids wouldn't be taking expensive rat poison and ruining their health or killing themselves. Of course, if legalized, things like driving on drugs and drink should result in a lifelong ban. Furthermore, governments could also make millions from it and spend it on creating a better service for the few who sadly fall victim to addiction and the rest of the cash could be spent on bettering the standard of living for the homeless and unemployed — or in Europe's case, spent helping the flood victims.

IN: Have you ever had a gig in the States?

Dalek: Not yet. I would like to, but I doubt that they'll allow me to play there once they find out what it is I play, as it seems from the reports I hear that the authorities are quite prude. Californian Wet & Hard DJ Pat was approached by the police while DJing and they threatened him with immediate arrest if he played any more Wet & Hard records. Total hypocrisy! In the country where the most porn films are produced you are not allowed to play records with fucking or sucking sounds (but it's alright if it's in a hip-hop record? and it's alright to have killing and guns — is sex so dangerous?) I feel sad for the people who are living in the US today who can't see what is happening all around them. Politically, Europe is distancing itself from the US because there is talk of war and this is a very sad situation. It is disturbing us all. Will anyone in the US be able to do anything about it without being branded a terrorist traitor? Under the veil of democracy the American people are being oppressed and blinded and into believing what their leaders are telling them. They have a new improved Secret Security Service and new laws to control the people on all levels. You can draw parallels, but what remains is, we have been down that road once before in Europe. Is it now America's turn?

IN: Where do you see Wet & Hard music going in the future?

Dalek: If the US authorities and the moral majority have anything to do with it — probably to prison.

IN: Any closing thoughts?

Dalek: Keep it Wet & Hard!

Dalek: Unfortunately, Yes. But I really don't care, as this negative attitude comes from a minority of intolerant elitists who have forgotten the concept of entertainment. I don't make music for these people, as I have many fans worldwide who have immense fun playing with the concept of Wet & Hard. Sure, I get scorned by some of the older DJs who try and ridicule Wet & Hard, because they find it stupid, pornographic, and embarrassing. They simply can't relate to it (I suppose it might have something to do with age?) Maybe they can't accept that I am just doing my own thing. For example, look at Brian Eno and ambient music. When he made his first ambient albums under the title ambient it was the height of the punk era. He was the only one doing that kind of music. Meanwhile it has become an accepted genre in its own right and it has many followers. It is always so easy to copy what others have already done before you. The guidelines have been well defined for you to follow, a bit like painting by numbers, especially after over twelve years of techno and trance. It's much more difficult to do something different, as people are usually quite closed-minded and resilient to change. With Wet & Hard I simply want to present a fresh and alternative club sound and give it an individual identity, so that people don't have to use a thousand adjectives to try and describe it. It is as it says — Wet & Hard.





Neutral – Motion Of (Mad Monkey / Hymen)
Song writing and modern electronic music are usually two things that are not combined. The 2002 version of the electronic musician focusing on dance appeal or ear scorching, while lyrics are either absent or better off ignored. With her second album, Nicole Elmer (Neutral) turns her back to this approach. Here it comes again, her nice, sometimes relaxed, often angst-ridden voice, at the core of almost all the tracks of this album. Whereas one could be prepared for another of these albums where IDM melodies and beats tap the rhythm of the tracks, Nicole Elmer's lyrics and an acoustic guitar are the heart of *Motion Of*. Closer to Mad Monkey's experimental and steadily "fun" releases than to Hymen's industrial spheres, Neutral offers here moods that range from melancholia ("A Departure That Works") to pure pop song appeal ("Paper Boy"). Starting from the bleeps and noises of "..." and "Carbon", this CD contains very well crafted and rather original tones, this album isn't only what synthpop should really mean: it manages to be interesting and rich music-wise, and still to fit the vocals. Here is definitely a CD that is made to stay, and which shouldn't age too quickly.

Dryft – Mytotype Exyt EP (Component Records)
Warning: If *Cell*, the debut by this Gridlock side-project, was a very interesting drum'n'bass album, here comes something that goes beyond and hits harder. First, the opening two tracks are pure bliss, mixing up-to-date rhythms, Middle-Eastern melodies and heavy but flowing beats on broken patterns. Still reminding of Gridlock for the emotional and mid-paced aspect, this album still incorporates some remnants of d'n'b influences, but get more hectic with the IDM-ish influences and MC on the title track. Finally, the melodies that were usually kept in the background with Gridlock get here in the forefront. The first remix, by Codec (the track listing on the sleeve is wrong), is an excellent version of the first track, that keeps the melody and the broken beats, but adds yet more catchiness. The Exclipse remix is more dry and percussive, and the final remix by O2 adds more complexity to the original material. In my humble opinion, *Mytotype Exyt* is the best material by any Gridlock member since *Further*. When the end of the year and the times of the "best releases of 2002" come, remind me to think of

Recycle Your Ears is a new column for Industrialnation, manned by Nicolas Chevreux, the force behind the webzine by the same name (see <http://www.recycleyourears.com> for more details) and the man behind the Ad Noiseam record label. *Recycle Your Ears*, the webzine, is the preeminent source for news, reviews, and events on industrial music, with a decided focus on experimental forms such as dark ambient, powernoise, tekknoid, and more. Here, Nicolas has compiled reviews of his top music picks this year.

this one.
Lustmord – Zoetrope (Nextera)
It has long been known that "industrial" veteran and sound designer extraordinaire Lustmord had moved to Hollywood, working as a musician on movies. *Zoetrope* is the first of his release to be linked to these works, being a reworked version of the score written for a short movie based on Kafka's "In the Penal Colony." The trailer for this movie is actually available on the CD, and looks extremely interesting. Music-wise, *Zoetrope* takes some sonorities from Lustmord's *Metavoid*, but in a less track-oriented way. The sound, crystal-clear as always is electronic but extremely rich and deep. Heavy in the bass, the tracks build slowly, while shorter, more dynamic sound effects are used to add more tension to the soundtrack. I found myself listening to this CD louder and louder, reaching the limits of my speakers in the process. It is not really surprising, but *Zoetrope* proves once again that Lustmord is one of the "greats" out there. As good as *Metavoid* was, but maybe more accessible, here is a fantastic piece of music that I will keep close to my stereo for some time.

Do Make Say Think – & yet & yet (Constellation)
Do Make Say Think is a Toronto based project whose albums are released on Constellation, and who therefore can not but be compared to their more famous label-mates, Godspeed You Black Emperor. And if Do Make Say Think also play a moving and instrumental post rock, their music is different from Godspeed's more rock oriented sound and less based on classical instruments. Calm and fragile, the music on this CD is definitely the output of some mutant rock act, a broken band that would have kept his instruments and compiled the product of rainy day jam sessions. The lead is given by the guitar, but the sound is populated with little details, most of all the modest but catchy drums, who set the pace for all the other instruments. The whole thing is still very human, and doesn't have the massive intensity of Godspeed, staying human and warm. More compact and somewhat more personal than the previous albums, *& yet & yet* is a real success that will hopefully bring to Do Make Say Think the recognition they deserve.

Sonic Dragolgo – Don't Stop The Music (Klangkrieg)
Sonic Dragolgo is a one man act from Japan, and *Don't Stop the Music* seems his first album to be available in my side of the planet. Its cover is rather ugly, but its content, just as weird, has turned out to be a very addictive treat. Imagine some kind of noisy happy hardcore mounted on grunge guitars, vocoded Japanese voices, pop appeal, and a lot of musical talent on top of this. *Don't Stop the Music* is a roller-coast-

er, alternating fast and heavy passages with more accessible ones, and always coming in bright sniny packaging. As mad as it is, *Don't Stop the Music* makes you tap the rhythm and sing in the shower. Not afraid of looting the 80's (for example on "Sister"), this is a hard pop album, the thing that will make your little brother and your grandmother listen to gabber. Hard to describe, this album by Sonic Dragolgo reminds me slightly of Ohgr's *Welt* album, for its combination of pop melodies and electronic extravaganza. But if Ohgr were walking the nostalgia path, Sonic Dragolgo melts everything into structured yet energetic songs. On top of that, we even get a diverse album, with its slows ("Angela") and its fast gabber-meets-japanese-disco stompers ("Don't Stop the Music"). One of its kind and tasty.

Ah Cama-Sotz – La Procesié de la Sangre (Hands Productions)
Since the *Mantra* MCD, the pillar of the noise scene that is Ah Cama-Sotz had taken a new direction, more rhythmic and energetic. *La Procesié de la Sangre* is the album with which this evolution blooms. The beats and structure are more mature, the whole thing is more balanced. The album, made of several alternating themes keeps on going from atmospheric tracks to more violent ones. The beat oriented tunes, constituting the core of this CD are fast building, and keep the beat steady. They are less noisy than one could expect, but have a good, almost bodily heaviness (and even some vocals). Obviously, this album is Ah Cama-Sotz's best produced material, with a lot more details, more varied and just working better as a whole. Already an essential act for his scene, this project signs here my favorite album from him. Ah Cama-Sotz has managed not to repeat himself, which is a minor tour de force and a very good thing.

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!AiBoFoRcEn<-

Interview by
SARIN

IN: What is the preferred or proper way to spell Aiboforcen? I've seen Aiboforcen or !AiBoFoRcEn", and I'm not sure if there are any others. And what does the name mean? I see it's Necrophobia in reverse, but would you tell us about how it came about, what meaning it originally had, as well as any it has taken on?

Seba: Well, we indeed started using it with the exclamation mark (stating: beware!!!) and the dot at the end indicating you had to read backwards. We also played with small and capital letters in reference to a';GRUMH..., the only industrial band hailing from the same place in Belgium. With the return of Aiboforcen on our 3rd album, we decided to keep Aiboforcen as a one-word and forget about all the past details, only our true and initial fans knew about. Aesthetically, it was also much easier to use on a cd sleeve!!! Why that name... hmmm... the initial concept was centred around the fear of death, and we noticed that when spelling "necrofobia" backwards and giving it a plausible pronunciation sounded interesting and confusing. Many thought it was referring to the "forces of aibo" or whatever. And we were also damned sure no other band would be using the same name (laugh)!! And a quick anecdote, we now have in our studio a poster of Sony's Aibo™ robot... We love it!!!

IN: I heard a rumor *Sons Palliatifs*, your newest album, existed just before Khazad-Dum collapsed, and either appeared in very limited runs or was about to appear (it was all rumor). Could you comment on that?

Seba: This is not true. Just after the release of *Face (of) Death*, Anne-Laure H. (who cared for female vocals back then) and I parted. We had then also broken our deal with Celtic Circle Prod. with the intention to release the 3rd album elsewhere. They could still put out the "Dying Rose" single with a bunch of remixes we had and our video for the song. Then the label collapsed without releasing it and we were never paid for the two releases there and all the rest. All of this discouraged us a bit working further and we put the project on freeze and stopped writing new Aiboforcen material. At that time only "Shepherd's Deathline" had been written for the next album plus 2 other tracks (we eventually totally dropped). I then worked on the INTERNAL project together with John N. Sellekaers and our album was released by Zoth Ommog. That album gave us the trigger to work again on Aiboforcen after a certain break.

IN: Why the delay between *Face (of) Death* and *Sons Palliatifs*? I know bits and pieces of the story - i.e., a lot has happened to the labels and bandmates in that time - but can you tell me about it yourselves to clear up any rumors I might have heard.

Seba: Like I just said, we had the departure of Anne-Laure plus the trouble with Celtic Circle. Then, having decided to work again together, we also thought we needed to bring in new personalities into the project and recruited our friends Laurence and Thomas. But working with 4 people when we were used to studio sessions with the 2 of us was not always easy. So the writing and recording process of *Sons Palliatifs* was quite long as well. Then came the never-ending moment to shop around for a label. After having wasted our time with a couple of labels, we were to release it on Zoth Ommog. We even had a recording session of the album with Tallia's producer Vernon B. in the

Aiboforcen is one of those rare gem bands that should really be mentioned in everyone's top 10 industrial bands lists. Or ok, at the very least, they deserve two times more attention than they have received, and should be in constant rotation at clubs like more famous Metropolis bands Funker Vogt, Velvet Acid Christ, or VNV Nation. And yet somehow, this easily deserved fame seems to elude them, at least here in the United States. The core of Aiboforcen is Benoit Blanchert and Seba(stien) Dolimont, two hardcore industrial kids from Belgium. They, along with Bernard Van Isacker, also run their own label, Alfa Matrix, which is not surprisingly the new home of Aiboforcen. But despite all that, Seba is probably best known for the long running Side-Line magazine, highlighting the biggest and best of industrial music, and related genres and culture. Actually, now that I mention it, it's kind of scary to do a magazine interview with him, since his vast magazine experience makes him one of the best people to edit it after I'm done!

Aiboforcen currently has three albums and a single available. *Elixir Lytique* is your traditional album with remixes. It is the most sparse and raw, but the songwriting is very high quality, even though this is their debut. *Face (of) Death* is more of a full-length EP, with many remixes of *Elixir Lytique* tracks, plus a few new ones (including "Shepherd's Deathline", which I heard was a hit for them, though you couldn't tell in backwater San Francisco). The remixes of *Elixir Lytique* tracks "Ghost of My Life" (by Regenerator, who also represent Seba's Side-Line magazine in the US), "The Dying Rose" (featuring Psyche as guest vocalist), and E.W.I.F. (by VNV Nation when they were in their prime and making industrial instead of trance music) are classic, almost legendary, instantly filling dance floors even though no one knew who it was - people dance to it while listening to it for the first time, which in industrial is the mark of a truly great dance track!

After a much too long break, Aiboforcen finally returns with *Sons Palliatifs*, their third and latest album. Laurence Hennuy performs female vocals this time, replacing long-standing Aiboforcen vocalist Anne-Laure H, while Thomas Desamourey provides additional musical support. *Sons Palliatifs* is available on Alfa Matrix, of course, in both a regular and limited 2CD edition (the second CD features exclusive remixes from the regular album). The new material, when fierce and dancefloor driven, is unparalleled - they are one of the very top bands in the world at this, and make "would be's" like Funker Vogt look soft. But they match these with an assortment of other tracks, such as more ambient pieces, or even a Cure cover. The remixes, meanwhile, showcase the talents and strengths of the remixers, usually taking each track in a new direction unique but distinctive of the remixers. In other words, if you know the remixer, you can guess where the remix goes. But despite that I love many of the remixers own material, I usually loved Aiboforcen's versions best - after all, it's Aiboforcen, one of the top industrial acts recording today. That's a lot to compete with.

Seba, representing Aiboforcen, was gracious to take time away to answer a few questions for us, about their future as well as their past.



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Music Research studio's. But this material was rerecorded and self-produced by ourselves later when we decided to do everything on our own and launch the Alfa Matrix label. All in all, we now see it as a learning process which allowed us to upgrade our own studio and becoming totally independent in all we do. And this was the best choice. It was long for the fans, and we are very very happy that after so many years they were still there to welcome our *Sons Palliatifs* album.

IN: Why the change in line up?

Seba: Female vocals are definitely part of Aiboforcen for us, so Anne-Laure needed to be replaced. Laurence H. accepted lending her voice to *Sons Palliatifs* on which we also had our long time friend Patrice Synthea who had already sung "Ghost Of My Life" with us on *Face (of) Death* and sang "Freezing Dreams" on the 3rd album. It was so great working again with her for *Sons Palliatifs* that we offered her to join the band for the more melodic dancey tunes of Aiboforcen. That's why you find her again on our current single (available on Square Matrix 001) on two tracks. Meanwhile Laurence and Thomas have nowadays less and less time for the band so Aiboforcen is today more or less reduced to the initial duo: Benoit & Seba. Patrice will sing a bunch of tracks on the next "Kafarnaüm" album, but we also count on having a few other female vocalists. We already have made some very interesting recording sessions, but we prefer to reveal the details later if you don't mind. But we want the new album to also have its darker moments in contrast to the more poppy tunes featuring Patrice as lead female singer.

IN: I've heard you mention a theme of death between the three major Aiboforcen releases (i.e., *Elixir Lytique*, *Face (of) Death*, and *Sons Palliatifs*). Could you explain it, including how each album fits in the whole?

Seba: To put it in a nutshell, *Elixir Lytique* (lethal elixir) displays us in the position of fear of death. On *Face (of) Death*, we dare to approach the Black Queen, we dare to face her. In fact we accept death as it is. On *Sons Palliatifs* (palliative sounds) we close the trilogy by summarising the two previous chapters, and it brings us to the other side. Those who know the hidden track on our 3rd album realize that Aiboforcen did survive, while our machines passed away. We enter a new life, a new process, and a new musical approach. And I insist, the songs featured on our current single are definitely NO hints of what the new album will be. We wanted a clubby single, so we made dancefloor poppy tracks with the typical Aiboforcen sounds. No more. The next album "Kafarnaüm" is dedicated to organised chaos, so the music will most probably turn out much more tortured and complex this time.

IN: How popular is Aiboforcen in various parts of the world?

Seba: I think we do not have to complain about that at all! We get fan mail from everywhere. And the reaction to our new album was 10 times better than what we had ever expected. And the sale figures of our album are pretty good I must say for a band that is not performing live. 'Cause everyone knows that a band especially builds up its name on concerts.

IN: There is a photo of a live show in the *Face (of) Death* CD jacket. Tell me about Aiboforcen live and would you play in the U.S. if the right booking agent/promoter helped out (hint hint?). And do you have any tour plans currently (come to the U.S.)?

Seba: Well, Aiboforcen is above all a studio band. We performed in Europe for the first 2 records but were never really satisfied with our work. So we will not perform concerts until we are totally ready. But first there must be a real demand for it. We of course got offers from various countries when *Sons Palliatifs* was released, but we had to decline them all. Working with various guest singers makes it also a bit more difficult for us of course! But, Patrice being in California, just convince her to make an Aiboforcen tour and we'll take the road with her and would arrange something around that. But now priority goes to the new record we want to release in the second half of 2003, if all goes well, then we'll see!

IN: I've noticed there are many vocalists. How does this work in the studio? Do they collaborate on lyrics, or work independently? How is the theme for vocals in tracks picked?

Seba: It all depends on the vocalist of course. Until now, all lyrics were mine and guest vocalists joined us in the studio and sang the song. With our new single, we started experimenting and Patrice recorded her own vocals in her studio. She got basic lyrics from me and got inspired by them, edited them, rewrote them, and then recorded her voice the way she wanted it to sound! Then we took her voice and reconstructed the final song from there. She only sang on rough demo tracks, that way she



had more space to experiment and add her own melody and feel to the song. For the voice version of "Lobotomie Matricielle" featuring Dominique from NEIKKA RPM, I simply explained to her what the song meant to me, and she wrote her own lyrics from there. A few weeks ago we had an Australian singer in our studio. The concept of the new album being chaos. She thought she would get lyrics from us, but in fact we asked her to improvise lyrics and only played her beats and bass lines. The result is amazing!!!! It was a very intense recording session that we hope to reiterate soon.

IN: How do you pick the people to remix your material? And do you have some favorite remixes?

Seba: Our concept has always been the following: new artists can definitely make better remixes than bigger names. So each time we both admire a newcomer band that we get on pretty well with, we try to fix a remix with them. That way we had remixes from bands like VNV Nation, Icon Of Coil, Negative Format, Assemblage 23, Flesh Field before they were really known!!! Which is lots of fun of course! Sometimes bands offer to remix us as well... Friendship and good music is the keyword in our selection. Any remix we released, means that we liked it!!

IN: I also know you remix other artists. Tell me about what goes into an Aiboforcen remix?

Seba: The essential point is that Benoit must feel the song he's bound to remix. There's no point making a remix because you have to! He must be touched by the song and feel a leak in the song where he could transform it into an Aiboforcen-type of tune. That's what we enjoyed doing recently for Regenerator, Hungry Lucy, Negative Format, and Clan Of Xymox. A remix needn't be a cover; it must add something new - if not, it's boring for the original artist. The best reflection of this is probably the very chaotic remix we did for Clan Of Xymox, while everyone expected us to make a catchy EBM tune of it.

IN: What are you currently listening to? Obviously the Alfa Matrix roster, which is genuinely impressive, but what else would you say particularly interests or influences you?

Seba: Through my work for Side-Line magazine, I am of course exposed to tons of new music, but this also prevents me from listening to the same stuff again and again. I personally mostly listen to anything that is electronic and melodic. But noise can be very melodic as well! Our label mates of MNEMONIC beautifully demonstrate it on their new material featured on Square Matrix 002. And I must admit that I have a slight preference for female vocals. My favourite records of the moment include Ladytron, Steril, Covenant, Assemblage 23, etc. Benoit is on his side much more open minded and listens to many different styles of music

ranging from Marilyn Manson to Moby to Icon Of Coil or even Theatre Of Tragedy.

IN: The art and packaging is quite nice, especially on *Sons Palliatifs*. What messages or impressions do you hope fans will take away from it, if any? And what's with the rubber glove that came in the limited *Sons Palliatifs* (I ask kindly)?

Seba: We wanted it to represent the depressive state of the other side and mix it with the heavy atmospheres you find in hospital wards specializing in palliative care where patients are waiting for their day to come!! Laurence H.'s husband, Jean-François Soyez is a photographer and he came up with all the photos we used, it was his concept, and we found it pretty excellent! He's really talented, and brilliantly interpreted his own perception of our music. As far as the rubber glove, well, such gloves are often used in palliative care hospitals, and they symbolised for us a sort of protection from Death! And it's a bit shocking as well...

IN: How did Aiboforcen first come together? Tell me about the early history.

Seba: Wouwh!!! Such a long time ago. Well, I was then managing the Belgian band Fuze Box Machine and we one day offered him to do a side-project together with my long time friend Benoit. After a few months of intensive work on his computer, Benoit felt enough confidence to pursue the project as a duo. He eventually even co-wrote the Fuze Box Machine album! Everything developed from there. After a bunch of compilation tracks, we got signed to Celtic Circle, who had reacted to our first demo tape, and signed us on the never released second demo that eventually mostly became our debut album *Elixir Lytique*.

IN: "Testing New Waters" is another fantastic dance track. Is this part of a forthcoming release? Or more generally, what new releases are in the works?

Seba: Alternative and darker versions of both new songs featured on our current single will most probably be featured on the next album *Kafarnaüm*. But it's still too early to say right now. 'Cause there's still a lot to do. Benoit wrote lots of new basic tracks, but he recently moved out and is busy reinstalling the whole studio. After that we can enter the production phase, adding vocals, giving a structure to the songs, etc. Meanwhile he also had to remix "Testing New Waters" and "Give Me These Wings" for some compilation appearances like Cryonica Tanz 2 or Venus XX part II.

IN: I notice the key members of Aiboforcen are also the key people behind Alfa Matrix. Just out of curiosity, if the offer was right, would Aiboforcen ever consider signing to another label? Also what about licensing - will we ever see Aiboforcen on Metropolis, say?

Seba: Well, I first want to insist on the fact that Alfa Matrix is indeed Benoit and myself, but it's also a 3rd person: Bernard Van Isacker who also plays an essential role in the label. All decisions are taken by the 3 of us together. And Aiboforcen were signed to Alfa Matrix with a contract, just like any other band! So we have a worldwide deal for 2 more albums on Alfa Matrix. They have the right to license our material anywhere with our prior consent. So if any decent and convincing licensing offer would happen, there's no reason why it would be refused. But it needs to be a honest deal from people who believe in the music of the band and understand it, not only in its sales!!! When our deal will be over, we'll see what we'll do, but until now we see no reason of changing label. We have full control on all we do and like we often say: never better served than by yourself. But we are aware that Alfa Matrix is a small indie label, and that being on a good major might open new doors for us. Wait and see! But our sole intention in making music is having fun and writing music for ourselves and sharing it with people who enjoy what we do, no more.

IN: Please share a story about Aiboforcen fans.

Seba: We keep them confidential and respect the privacy of our fans!! (laugh) But we love them all, and really enjoy receiving their comments and questions about our music and lyrics.

AIBOFCEN

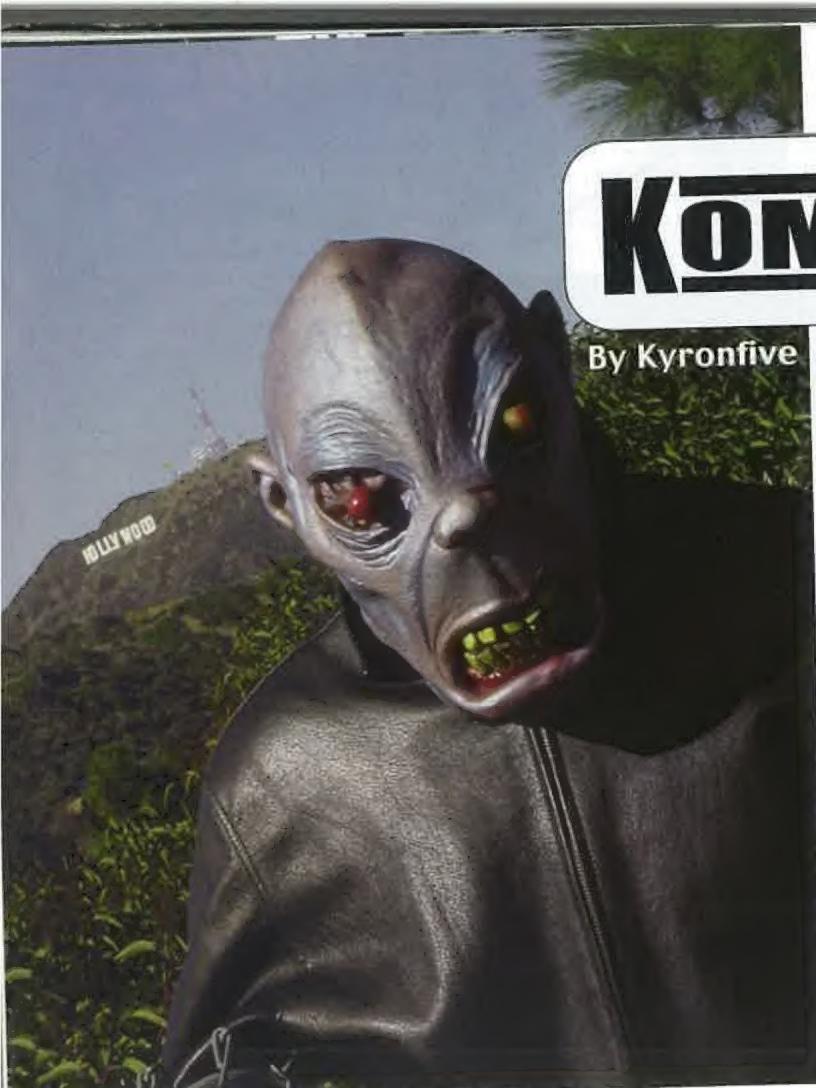
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In this 21st century world of file-sharing, Napster clones, and the venerable MP3.com —home to mediocre demos by exuberant 17 year olds all over the planet, the odd download that gets people's attention is a rare thing. Such is the case with Kompressor.

KOMPRESSOR

By Kyronfive

Unabashedly low-tech, with gravelly vocals spouting some very peculiar lyrical themes, Kompressor has gone from a net-savvy in-joke to a full blown phenomenon.

One visit to the Kompressor website www.kompressormusic.com and you'll begin to see why. Frontman Andreas K, apparently German-born but Ohio-based, sports an unusual take on the English language (sentences are often devoted to words like 'the') and a Halloween mask in every photo. Download the MP3s and you'll get a taste of Kompressor logic. Interspersed between original songs with titles such as "We Must Destroy X-10," "You Get Salmonella," and "Brush Your Teeth" (a children's song) are the odd covers "Girl For Ipanema," "You Will Call Me Kompressor" (a cover of Paul Simon's "You Can Call Me Al") and "Kompressor Wants to Get With You" (a modified Beck cover). While Kompressor's bio purports that he uses "synth," "crush," "fear," and "death" as his four musical influences, it's apparent that a very deadpan sense of humor is probably the unspoken fifth.

Yet, despite the deadpan humor, Kompressor is earnestly bent on world domination. Since Kompressor's inception in 1997, Kompressor has released one demo, two full length records (*World Domination* and *Crush Television*, respectively) and a 2001 world domination commemorative T-shirt. In 2001, his popularity was large enough to warrant a mention in *Spin Magazine*, no small feat for a band that is self-released. In 2003, Kompressor plans to have a new album written and a tour may be in the works. Clearly, Kompressor gets closer to world domination with every step.

In an interview done this September, IN penetrated the mask of Kompressor frontman Andreas K and discovered the true meaning of Kompressor Might.

IN: Tell us a little about the man behind the mask. Just who is Kompressor? What does he desire?

Andreas K: The identity of Kompressor must be concealed from all people. Even in live show, we must cover ourselves with masks to prevent identification. If you spread knowledge against corporations and against government, these large things try to attack you and stop speech against them.

IN: What are Kompressor's predominant musical influences?

Andreas K: Music does not influence sound of Kompressor. Much music is played on radio, shown on television, which has no power. Even many electronic music artists have no power; the music is only samples and noise. Kompressor has background in machinery, things such as pile driver, concrete saw, bulldozer. These things influence music. Kompressor wishes to help the minds of people with ideas to break free from mass media, the music is to shape minds like these machines shape earth and construct new things from it.

IN: Describe in 25 words or less just what exactly 'Kompressor Might' truly is.

Andreas K: Kompressor Might is the power of Kompressor Music to fight corporations, newspaper, television, radio. It animates people and forces them to think.

IN: Other than Kompressor, what does K stand for?

Andreas K: This is most important meaning of this letter. In German language this letter is common, it is not so common in English.

IN: We know Kompressor does not dance, so what does he do in his free time?

Andreas K: Computer programming jobs are not common to find in the United States like they are three years ago. To acquire money, there is landscaping performed. Kompressor is skilled at this, if you need this service you find that we have precision and speed at landscaping.

IN: Does Kompressor mind the fact that there are Mercedes Benz cars all over the world with his band name emblazoned on them?

Andreas K: It is testament to Kompressor Might that even car companies wish to use this name. Kompressor is not known to radio and television consumers, but is enemy of large corporations, and many know of Kompressor. Once exposed to the strength of ideas and the power of Kompressor Music, many want to spread these ideas and give this power to others.

IN: Define for us exactly what Kompressor's plan for world domination is.

Andreas K: Kompressor world domination is not for war, not for killing, not for government. Instead this is for all people to hear music and to know of alternate ideas not given to them by newspaper and television. Many good bands, industrial music bands, experimental music artists are not heard because those who control these things are not concerned with the happiness of people. They are concerned only with money, only with promoting artist with bad music that is paid well by major label. Kompressor world domination is changing these things so that

people everywhere hear music that animates and music that changes their ideas, instead of same song every hour on radio, same video with same basketball jersey and same dancing women.

IN: Are there any plans for a Kompressor tour?

Andreas K: Kompressor tours extensively in 2001, we do not have funds to tour at this time, perhaps in 2003 this is possible. We thank all fans for supporting Kompressor and making live performance possible, we spread Kompressor Might to America and Europe in all parts, and people see this, and people enjoy this.

IN: Kompressor has written songs for children ("Brush Your Teeth," "Never Talk to Strangers") as well as educational songs ("Vitamins are Good," "Words"). Does Kompressor consider himself to be a positive influence on his listeners? What other lessons does Kompressor wish to impart on his fans?

Andreas K: The Kompressor Music is powerful, and enjoyed by all ages. There is no negative in music, only positive ideas. Young people need to know as much as adults that radio and television are only trying to sell products, newspaper is only for advertisements, articles are only for political bias. These ideas are not good, if we give good music to people with good ideas, this is only positive thing for them. Fans, and all people also, should know that music that is only good to tolerate (mediocre) is not good enough to listen to. With everything that is made, thousands of artists across world recording good music, if you dig you find many good things. Looking below surface is what must be done. All innovation happens far



below the surface, and trickles up slowly from bottom. Instead of occasional bubble of inspiration, those who enjoy music must find music where it is being created, where new ideas are made, and take it from that place. Good music is better for living. For every one artist like Beck that comes to surface of major labels, there are one thousand other artists with baritone voice and modern rock guitar.

IN: Kompressor has chosen to cover both Beck and Paul Simon. I noticed you mentioned Beck earlier in the interview. As well, I noticed there is a photo of Kompressor on the website reading a Paul Simon book. What insight does the fact that Kompressor has covered both of these artists give us about Kompressor music?

Andreas K: Beck is artist who uses Brazilian, Spanish, American influence from many decades in music. The ideas are open and are a success. But it is not pasting samples like many artists do, Beck writes good songs using these ideas for making music rather than stealing samples and putting on records. Paul Simon is artist who is on major label, releases many albums, but still album *Graceland* has many good songs. Production makes songs suffer, major label tries to crush creativity, but still song "You Can Call Me Al" is very good. This coversong is popular in live show due not only for good songwriting, but for showing that industrial music makes this song powerful.

IN: What would Kompressor do if he was President of the United States?

Andreas K: This is complex job. Many think that president is only one making decisions, but those who make laws are all over country, all over Washington, all over New York and even not in United States. President changes some things, president has speeches, but president does not control entire nation. If Kompressor has control over laws, many things would not change, but corporations are closely watched instead. Music industry does not get power to stop consumers from listening to music. Radio stations are not owned all by one company, giving bland things to people instead of powerful music.

KOMPRESSOR DOES NOT DANCE

IN: What is the future of Kompressor?

Andreas K: We are in studio currently starting work on new album, perhaps there is tour in mid or late 2003, Kompressor Music will not stop working to animate people and stop mass media until these goals are complete.

For more information on Kompressor, including purchasing CDs, shirts, & stickers, or to find out more about Kompressor's landscaping services, please visit the official Kompressor website at:

www.kompressormusic.com

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an interview with Daniel Logemann of **MASSIV IN MENSCH** by Nick Garland

With two computers and a microphone, Daniel Logemann, Mirco Osterthun and Sarah Folkens mix sheer power, vocal bliss and intelligent lyricism into an amazing amalgamation of German musical wizardry. Standing at the forefront of a new breed of techno-inspired dark electronic music, Massiv in Mensch explore traditional EBM musical structures and chart new elektro territory with their newest release *Die Rein*.

Their domestic debut *Belastendes Material* is a hard-driving jaunt into industrial and EBM realms saturated with both beautiful femininity and growling teutonic masculinity. Not ones for musical stagnation, however, Massiv in Mensch decided to expand on their repertoire by stripping their old sound down but still keeping their beat-driven skeleton for their new album. Their self-described "dark rave" music is a perfect antidote for what they see as stagnant EBM and synthpop genres and marks a crucial point in both the evolution of their sound and in the evolution of the genres in general.

Massiv in Mensch jack-of-all-trades, Daniel Logemann, chats with IndustrialNation about the new musical direction and their creative process.

IN: How did Massiv in Mensch form?

Logemann: Mirco and I founded Massiv in Mensch in 1993 but under a different name. We worked five years in our free time on electronic sounds and in different styles of electronic music like EBM, techno, trance, and goa. Then in 1998 we were searching for a female singer and some new influences so we changed our style radically and from now Massiv in Mensch sounds more song-oriented. Sure because of the female vocals from Sarah, which we know from our private environment, and furthermore because of the lyrics we combined with the music. The first product (after the DJ-promo) then was *Belastendes Material* in 2000.

IN: How does your early music compare to your current sound?

Logemann: Well, our sound now is more modern, cleaner and more dance/techno-oriented than the "old-school" EBM sound on our debut album. Sure, there are some things which are very similar on both albums, the beats for example, but our work now is more professional!

IN: What have been some of your biggest influences?

Logemann: On the one hand, sure, the great cynical German EBM heroes like Tommi Stumpff of Some More Crime and on the other hand some great actors and DJs inside the techno/trance and dance scenes.

IN: What does the name "Massiv in Mensch" mean?

Logemann: It means, "Massive inside the Human." It's more a play with words but it sounds very good and it symbolizes our main lyrical attitude, to describe decadence and the bad qualities of human.

IN: Why did you choose to perform all of your songs in German on *Belastendes Material*?

Logemann: We like the sound of the German language very much and it fits much more to the sound of this album.

IN: Who is Hans Gruber and what is the significance?

Logemann: "Hans Gruber" is a fictional name. We love the sound of this name. And it stands for typical German petty bourgeois and the schizophrenic character of these people.

IN: Did you create the name "Hans Gruber"?

Logemann: Yes, we created the name but sure there are thousands of "Hans Grubers" in Germany. But the name stands for the thing I mentioned.

IN: The spectacular vocals of *Belastendes Material* were absent on *Die Rein*. Why did you choose to accent the programming in *Die Rein*?

Logemann: Well the play with vocals on *Belastendes Material* was very cliché and sure very popular. But we always want to make something really new with the following product. That does not mean that we will never make something again but it should mean that our roots are instrumental, too. And sure we wanted to work with guest vocalists in the future too, because Mirco and I are not "real" singers, more hard-dis-

torted "speakers."

IN: Did you have a particular goal for *Die Rein*?

Logemann: The idea was to create a perfect, instrumental album with less vocals and more eye on the sounds and the structures of the songs. "Rein" means "clean" - clean from vocals and too many samples and so on.

IN: Where did you put together *Die Rein*? Do you have a home studio?

Logemann: We have two similar home studios.... well, Mirco and I both have two systems on which we can concept the songs and take it to the other studio and go on with the work. That's really cool. We are very software concentrated, more computer than hardware like synths and so on. We've got a professional microphone and so on and the production is like in a huge studio with programs like Pro Tools.

IN: What does "Mein Erstes Bonbon," translate to in English and what does the song symbolize?

Logemann: It means "My First Drop" and the title fits to the sample which is in the song. The song is very naive and playful. The character of the song fits to the title and that was our intention.

"...it was really logical for us to release something totally new like 'Die Rein,' with absolute techno influences in it."

IN: You have placed a lot of vocal samples in your songs. Where do these come from?

Logemann: The samples are from movies or television reports, news and so on. We have sampled tapes for kids like "Masters of the Universe." [laughs] We always search for fitting samples but we have limited the sampling on *Die Rein* as you can probably see "Belastendes Material" has got much more samples in ninety percent of the songs. "Willst Du'n Bonbon?" means "Do you want a drop?" The sample is from Predator 2.

IN: From where do the themes in your lyrics come?

Logemann: As I already mentioned. The lyrics deal with decadence and bad attitudes of humanity. Our daily lives inspire us.

IN: Does American culture inspire your music?

Logemann: Not consciously or directly because we don't know the "scenes" very well. We always hear from the media but that's not very personal for us.

IN: What are some specific examples of experiences or events that have inspired you?

Logemann: Well I'm not able to pinpoint one event or one example. It's the history itself. Our musical change, our experiences with famous people of the scene, our contacts, our daily lives, personal experiences - everything can be a trigger to make something new in our music.

IN: How do you decide which songs get vocals and which don't?

Logemann: Well the decision comes when we hear the finished song. Then it's obvious if a song can get vocals or not. We have worked on electronic music since 1993 and so it's really inside us to know if a song is complete or not.

IN: Do you feel that using both female and male vocals gives some balance to your music?

Logemann: Sure. It's a good contrast and works very good to hear more facets of vocals in one song. On our debut we were able to assign every member of the band

his very own part inside the song and that was really great!

IN: Why do you believe electronic music is a good means of expression for you?

Logemann: Because the sound of electronic music is more "perfect" and clean than rock or pop music. It fits more to our personal request and the strong and hard staccato vocals which we have used. Together it's really a good and perfect combination for us.

IN: How did you get signed to Artofact Records in North America?

Logemann: Artofact licensed the debut CD from Wire Productions and released the album with a complete new artwork and two remixes. So we got in contact with Yolk from Artofact. We saw that there were very good basics to work with this label in the future, too. And so we decided to release *Die Rein* with Artofact in North America and in Europe, too.

IN: Have you ever thought of releasing your music on vinyl?

Logemann: Yes, there were some considerations regarding our next project, the *Uturn* compilation. I think that

are on position one in the official charts! That's typical for Germany... the sound is harsher... or as we Germans say "kantig."

IN: Do you enjoy doing remixes and why?

Logemann: Yes, it's really a cool thing to make something new of an existing song. And furthermore we can experiment with cool new sounds. So we profit in every sense from doing mixes.

IN: What can we expect from you on the Artofact *Uturn* compilation?

Logemann: Four brand new techno-oriented tracks in the style of *Die Rein* but in one case with really industrial elements, "Hass Kot." Furthermore, we've got a real kickin' remix from DJ Hellraver!

IN: What do you plan to do for your next album?

Logemann: Well we want to tour with the next album. We all hope to realize that in the next year! Well, it will be a really kickin' album. I will love it because it's the most precise and direct thing I have ever created... it's really dark rave. A techno album with sure EBM influences and the best of the two former albums will be represented on the disk. There will be more vocals on the album and we will work with guest musicians from other

this music is very suitable to release on vinyl. Especially in the German techno and dance scenes the DJs love to play the stuff from vinyl, more than from CD! So I think it could be a perfect option to release something really danceable in the future on vinyl, too.

IN: Why do you label your music 'dark rave'? Is it because you feel like you don't fit in any particular current genre?

Logemann: Yes, we are not EBM, we are sure not dark in the meaning of "dark wave" or "gothic." Our "dark" means more our kind of sarcastic humor. And "dark rave" sounds a lot like "dark wave" - so it's a genius play of words.

IN: Do you believe that the 'dark electronic' music genre is stagnating and why?

Logemann: Yes I think so because the scene is too dogmatic in my eyes. They are not able to get new influences. Here in Germany the dark electronic music concentrates now on soft futurepop like VNV Nation, Covenant, Apoptygm Berzerk and so on, then there is industrial pop like Suicide Commando or cliché electro like Terminal Choice. If there is a new band it's ninety percent likely that this band will make a sound which is one of the three, not individual. And so it was really logical for us to release something totally new like *Die Rein*, with absolute techno influences in it.

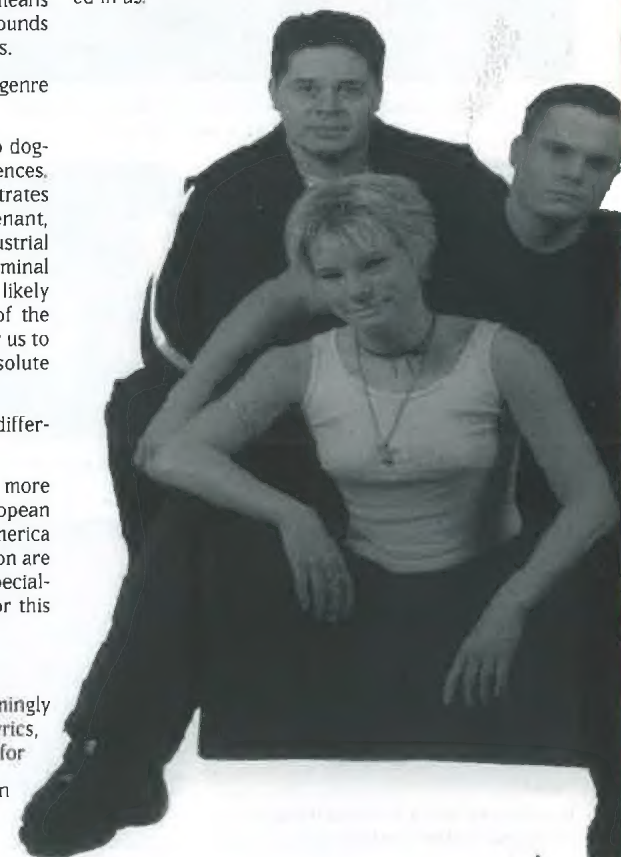
IN: Do European and American audiences respond differently to your music?

Logemann: Yes, the North American public is more enthusiastic and more open-minded than the European public! Unfortunately we haven't played in North America but the response and the feedback, reviews and so on are much better and enthusiastic than in Europe or especially Germany. The people are more open-minded for this kind of music!

IN: Why do you think that is the case?

Logemann: I think because of the perhaps seemingly strange character of German music or German lyrics, the sound of the voice and so on. It's more bizarre for

Logemann: Americans to listen to such stuff than here in Germany. Here it's all a bit conservative and the radio stations don't play Rammstein but they



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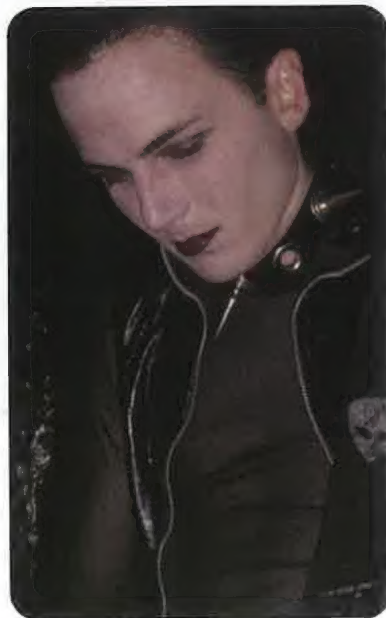
October 24, 2002 Cleopatra Records 10th Anniversary Party at the Key Club in Hollywood, CA U.S.

photos by Michael Achach

October 24th was a weekend of spooky Hollywood decadence for San Francisco IN staffers Lisa Swiss and Michael Achach, who were there to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Gothic/Industrial label Cleopatra Records. The party was held at the famous Hollywood venue, The Key Club; and headlining was the legendary 80s band, Sique Sique Sputnik, famous for their outrageous glam rock style. Opening night acts included Cleopatra recording artists Zeromancer, Switchblade Symphony, and Razed in Black. Many of Cleopatra's artists could be seen roaming around the venue to toast their label's success. The next night, Lisa and Michael set out for the 4 year anniversary of "Release the Bats," a monthly Death Rock club held at the Que Sera Bar in Long Beach. Element, an LA based Death Rock band that includes some of Release the Bat's DJs, played that night for all lucky bats to enjoy. Both nights supplied spooky royalty at its very best.



Shane, lead singer of Element, delivers cryptic messages @ Release the Bats.



Jeremy of Element & Ghostly Magazine @ Release the Bats.



Lisa Swiss of IN, Rommell of Razed in Black, & Bari-Bari of Mephisto Walz/Christian Death @ the Key Club.



SF DJ Rick A. Mortis, Vile, & friend @ Release the Bats.



Zeromancer Rocks the Crowd @ The Key Club.



Vile & Lisa Swiss of IN get cheeky @ Release the Bats.



Adrian of Blue Period & Deidra @ The Key Club.



Lisa Swiss of IN & Martin Degville of Sique Sique Sputnik @ Key Club.



Tony James of Sique Sique Sputnik & Alicia Alexander @ the Key Club.



Sharon of Diva Destruction & Michael Achach of IN @ Release the Bats.



Veronica O. & Jenn Bats looking cute & spooky @ Release the Bats.



21st Century boys Tony James and Martin Degville of Sique Sique Sputnik blow the crowd away at the Key Club.

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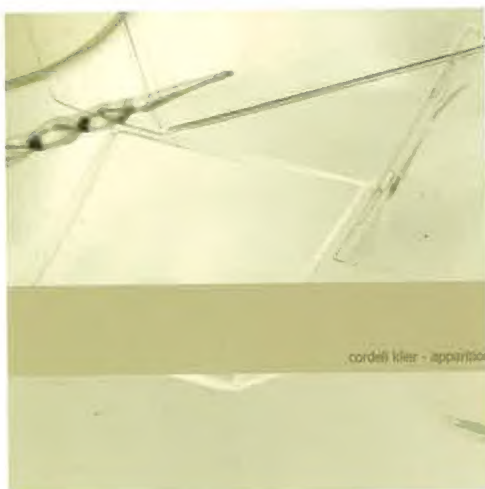
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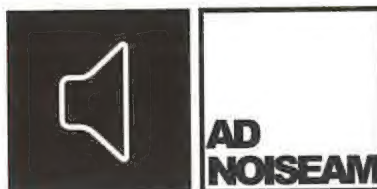


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